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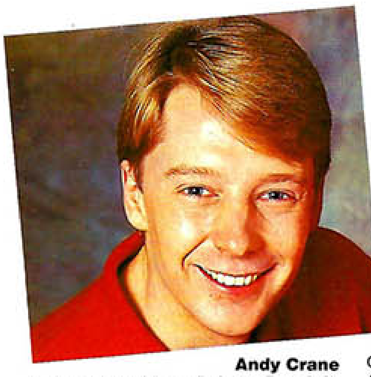
1993 • Is your Mega Drive ready for it?

Reading this? OK, you've either paid for your copy or ripped the bag off in the newsagents. Do *you* feel guilty?

6 MEGA CITY

Do video games *really* rot your brains? A lot of tabloid newspapers would have you believe so. We speak to psychological analyst Dr Dorothy Rowe – you may be surprised at what she has to say.There's also Voyage To The Bowels Of The Back Catalogue, "Bull" Durham and all the hottest, last-minute and essential Mega Drive gaming news from Japan, USA and Europe.
PLUS! MEGA exclusively reveals Sega's new six-button joypad for use with *Streetfighter 2*.

Why's Bull Durham in the news?



Andy Crane talks about Mega Drives, Dominik Diamond and "men in suits"

12 THE CHARTS

As Christmas does its thang, take comfort in the fact that here are possibly the only charts which are 100% Cliff Richard free – we do.

14 SO IS ANDY CRANE *REALLY* JUST IN IT FOR THE MONEY?

How much does ITV's Bad Influence! presenter Andy Crane care about video games? Does it matter if he doesn't give a hoot? All is revealed (metaphorically speaking of course, this is a family mag – and besides, he probably charges too much) on page 14.

16 WIN £1,000 OF CARTS!

Ballistic are feeling all generous at the moment. Not only have they emerged victorious from a long, drawn-out court case with Sega, but their *Universal Soldier* game looks set to do very well indeed. Recognising a decent blagging opportunity when we see one, we got straight on the blower to say "well done", "congratulations" and "how about giving us £1,000 worth of carts to give away then you lucky gits?". You see? It's easy, it really is.

Ballistic is back, BACK!

Sega's new light gun certainly looks the part, but can it turn you into Clint Eastwood?

18 THE MENACER IS HERE!

Yep, Sega's spanking new light gun has arrived. It's loads of fun and it comes with lots of free games, and *Terminator 2* from Flying Edge is just the first of what Sega promise will turn out to be a flood of compatible games – it looks like the Menacer has a rosy future ahead of it. But at a whopping £60 is the Menacer really worth selling your granny to an Arabian slave trader for? We pretend we're Clint Eastwood for five minutes then get all serious.

199

And MEGA's right on page 20 are 16 essential previews, Mega CD news and SINGLE known Me for the coming yea and start saving – look forward to

EVERY Mega Drive GAME! Reviewed and rated, starting on page 80

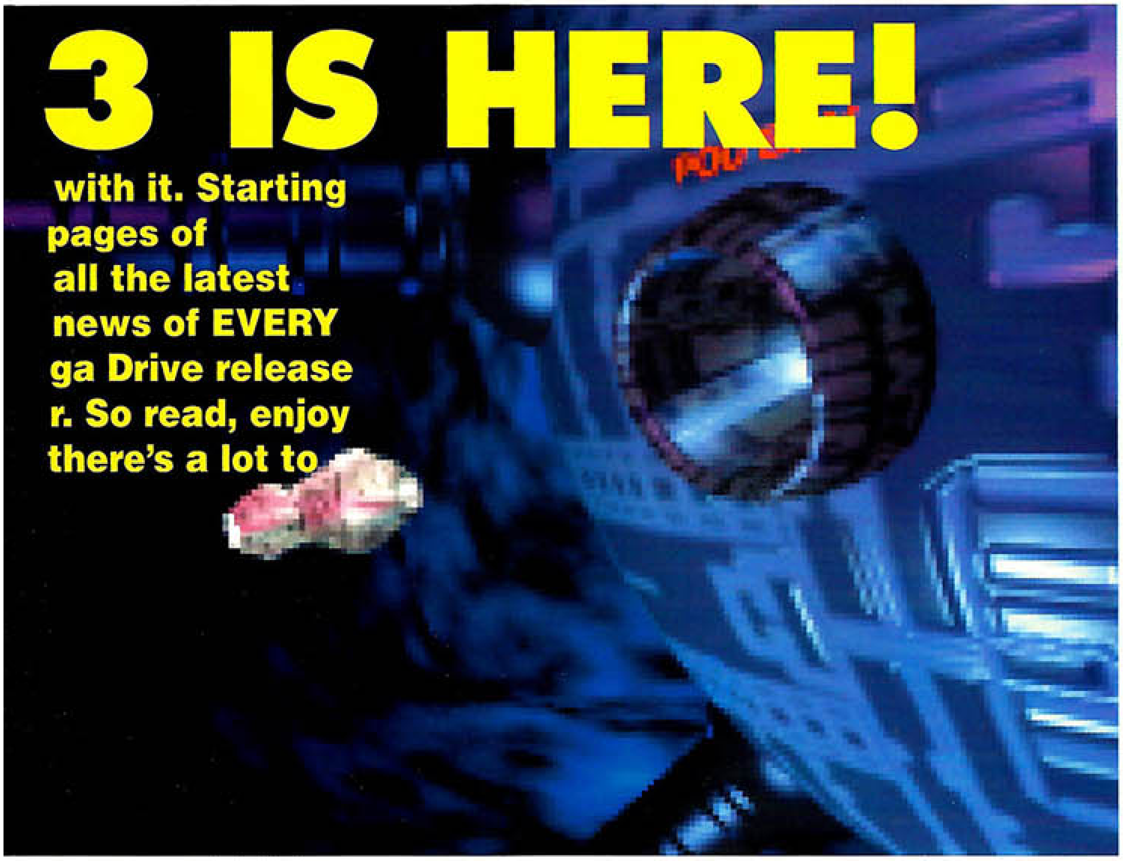
20 1993: THE ULTIMATE PREVIEW

Featuring *Streetfighter 2, James Pond 3, Strider 2, PGA Tour Golf 2* and *Micro Machines* (possibly the greatest race game ever), MEGA takes a look at the year that people are already calling "1993" (ahem). 16 pages of previews start on page 20…

REVIEWED THIS MONTH

Streets Of Rage 2 38
Indiana Jones 42
Super Wrestle Mania 44
Universal Soldier 46
Road Rash 2 48
Death Duel 50
Steel Talons 52
Mystical Fighter 54
Terminator 2 55
Shadow Of The Beast 2 56
Chiki Chiki Boys 57
Black Hole Assault 58
Gemfire 59
Risky Woods 60
Rampart 61
Super HQ 62

• 1993 • Take a look to the future...



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all the latest
news of EVERY
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r. So read, enjoy
there's a lot to

CONTENTS

66 MEGA PLAY
Having trouble with *Lemmings?* We've got every code you'll need to get you through those tough levels. PLUS! *Lotus Turbo Challenge* passwords, *Thunderforce 4* power-up cheats and many more besides. All this, AND 365 gaming cheats on your FREE calendar. Sorted.

69 RIP 'N' TIP
Alien 3 gets the full mapped solution treatment. So, if you've got the game, cut out the pages and sling 'em in with your game instructions. If you haven't got the game, just remember where the complete solution is – just in case.

74 ARENA
More secret bits, hidden bits, whacky challenges and funny goings-on, which could change the way you play your carts forever.

76 MEGA MEDIC
Wanna hear a secret? Even Paul "MEGA" Mellerick used to have gaming problems until he was visited by a fairy Mega Drive, which bestowed magic powers upon... Actually, that's a lie. We just lock him in the basement until he's solved all your problems. Ha!

80 TOP 100
Except it's not *just* the Top 100 Mega Drive games of all time! This month we review and rate EVERY SINGLE Mega Drive game ever – and there's almost 280 of them. Ever heard of *Masters Of Monsters, Mondu's Fight Palace, Ishido?* How about *Syd Of Vallis?* Well you have now.
PLUS! Reader ads – buy or swap that cart you've always promised yourself.

The Future Entertainment Show came, saw and used a *serious* amount of electricity

90 PURCHASE
The best Mega Drive add-ons money can buy, and all at REDUCED prices. This page, dear readers, is (as they say in the trade) chocka with quality bargains.

92 SUBSCRIBE
Your last chance to grab yourself a FREE copy of cult Japanese animated video Akira when you say "YES!" to our subscription offer.

99 COMPETITION WINNERS
We run as many competitions as we can, which inevitably means a lot of winners. Will your name be amongst the lucky few? And did someone *really* manage to get their copy of MEGA on TV?

100 SHOW BUSINESS
Riots, brawls, fights, fatal crushes, video game junkies – no, there were absolutely none of them at the Future Entertainment Show. Instead, there were just loads of video games and the MEGA team.

102 MEGA MOUTH
OK, bit of improvisational comedy this month as Neil attempts to answer your letters in the style of a magazine editor. (Makes a change)

106 SHUT DOWN
AAAARRGH! It's the end of the mag! We're all going to die! (Calm down, eh? – Neil)

Six pages packed with news • gossip •

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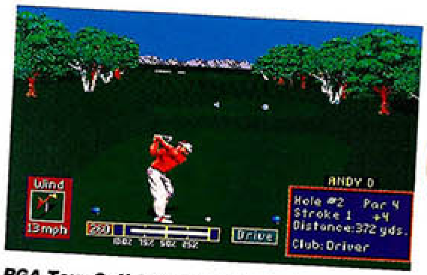
MEGA GOES FORTH!

Microcosm: One of the games we can expect to see from Psygnosis on the Mega CD

Welcome to the fourth edition of MEGA – Britain's best-selling Mega Drive magazine



PGA Tour Golf 2: Get your first glimpse here

Yep, in just four issues MEGA has overtaken all the other Mega Drive mags and is now racing away as the most popular read for Sega players who demand the most authoritative reviews and the most in-depth news. So congratulations to all you lot out there who're reading – looks like you're in at the start of something big (as long as we don't wind Sega up so much that we're closed down, but they started it).

Anyway, back to the issue in hand (the issue in your hand, to be precise). This month we look to the future. We take a look at what Psygnosis (the people who designed *Lemmings*) have in store for the Mega CD – it's the best CD stuff we've seen so far. We talk to the experts about *Streetfighter 2* on the Mega Drive – can Capcom really make it a success? MEGA scoop the rest of the world yet again to bring you a sneak preview of *Micro Machines* – quite possibly set to become the world's best driving game. We also bring you the first glimpses of *PGA Tour Golf 2* (the follow-up to the best multi-player game of all time).

Issue four of MEGA includes all this plus the latest news, the biggest reviews, a complete Mega Drive preview for 1993, and the latest news on the Mega CD. So have a good read and a cool yule. See you next year…

® *Neil, Andy, Paul and Amanda*

Mirco Machines: Read the exclusive preview in this issue of MEGA

ARE VIDEO GAMES ADDICTIVE?

Is your Mega Drive turning you into a violence-crazed, socially-retarded vegetable? Read the tabloids and you could become convinced you're in serious danger...

Take a look at the newspaper clipping below. It was written as a footnote to coverage of the recent Future Entertainment Show at Earls Court. What it says is absolute cobblers of course, but that doesn't stop the rest of the national press and TV chat shows leaping on the bandwagon in an attempt to spark off some controversy.

The clipping below contains quotes from a Dr Dorothy Rowe. Further to her apparent interest in the subject, she also appeared on ITV's The Time, The Place on Tuesday 17 November, when again it was the harmful effects of video games which were under the microscope.

So who is this Dr Dorothy Rowe? How is she qualified to talk about the psychological affects of video games, and have we really got to start worrying about our favourite leisure activity?

Neil immediately grabbed the phone (half-expecting to be accused of devil-worshipping) to speak with the supposed "renowned psychological analyst". The conversation went something like this...

"Hello Dr Rowe, my name's Neil West and I'd like to know how video games are rotting our brains, thank you very much."

"Video games are not a problem, playing them obsessively is just a symptom of a real problem elsewhere."

"Hang on. No, no no... you're meant to say that they rot your brain, and turn you into an axe murderer..."

"But they don't."

"Oh, really? Are you *sure*? Oh good. Erm..."

> **"In some cases video games *could* be described as addictive"**

Yep, it would appear that Dr Dorothy Rowe has been quoted ever-so-slightly out of context by TODAY. She is, in fact, a very reasonable psychologist, who simply warns of playing video games to excess. So are they addictive?

"When something is described as 'addictive' it simply means that someone returns to something time and again, so yes – using an exact definition, in some cases playing video games could be described as addictive. But it's not the games which are the problem. The real problem is what's pushing people to play them. Video games have no 'addiction-inducing' properties in themselves."

So why do some people find themselves "addicted"?

"A lot of the latest research shows that (traditionally) boys become addicted to video games for the same reasons that (traditionally) girls become anorexic. Teenagers often feel that they are not in control of any aspect of their lives; video games are often not understood by parents, but they give supreme control to the player – hence they are an ideal way for teenagers to gain control of an aspect of their lives. It's a similar process to the way eating can be controlled, hence some people take this control to extremes and become anorexic."

OK, so assuming outside pressures force people to become "addicted" to their consoles, is this harmful?

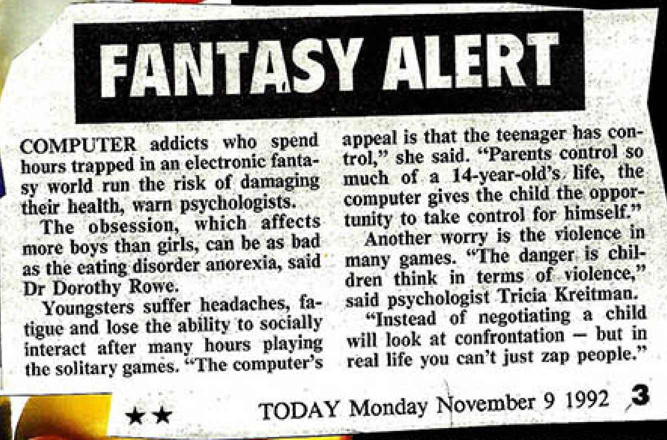
"Anything is harmful if taken to excess. But generally speaking playing video games is no worse (in some instances it's even a lot healthier) than watching TV, especially if the games are varied and demand player interaction."

It's common sense and logical to realise that excessive video game playing can lead to eye strain and lack of sleep, hence headaches and drowsiness, but on the other hand, a player's lateral thinking, hand-eye co-ordination and memory are all exercised by playing video games.

So how does Dr Rowe react to the cries of parents and the occasional news piece demanding the ban of video games?

"The older generations have always maintained that they 'don't know what the youth of today is coming to'. The problems teenagers face don't change, but the symptoms (be they growing long hair or listening to rock music) are always blamed by those looking for an easy explanation. Video games are just another example of this – they're just an easy escape from other problems."

So the message is simple: lead a full varied life and play as much Mega Drive as you want to, just make sure that you do other stuff as well. Ⓜ



FANTASY ALERT

COMPUTER addicts who spend hours trapped in an electronic fantasy world run the risk of damaging their health, warn psychologists.

The obsession, which affects more boys than girls, can be as bad as the eating disorder anorexia, said Dr Dorothy Rowe.

Youngsters suffer headaches, fatigue and lose the ability to socially interact after many hours playing the solitary games. "The computer's appeal is that the teenager has control," she said. "Parents control so much of a 14-year-old's life, the computer gives the child the opportunity to take control for himself."

Another worry is the violence in many games. "The danger is children think in terms of violence," said psychologist Tricia Kreitman.

"Instead of negotiating a child will look at confrontation – but in real life you can't just zap people."

★★ TODAY Monday November 9 1992 3

TODAY gets stuck into a subject it obviously knows very little about

WORRIED?

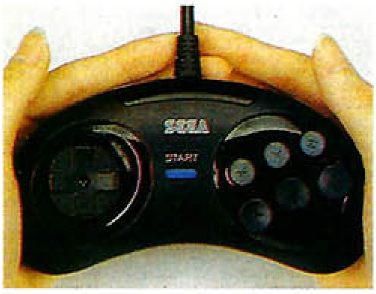
Are you "addicted" to video games? Do you think your health is suffering due to too much *Sonic*? Then get a grip bozo, and don't start blaming your console. Start treating your body with the respect it deserves. Get some fresh air, and if in real doubt, go see a doctor.

MEGA CITY

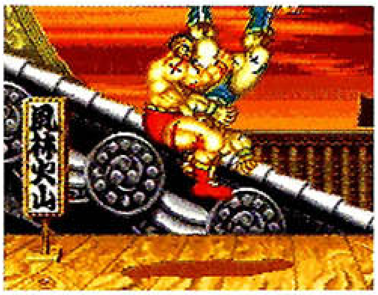
EXCLUSIVE! *STREETFIGHTER 2* JOYPAD REVEALED

Here's the UK's first picture of Sega's new joypad, designed for *Streetfighter 2.* The six-button pad will enable Capcom's programmers to make as near to a fully accurate conversion of the coin-op as possible, unlike the Amiga version of the classic beat-'em-up, which looks set to feature only eight moves per character.

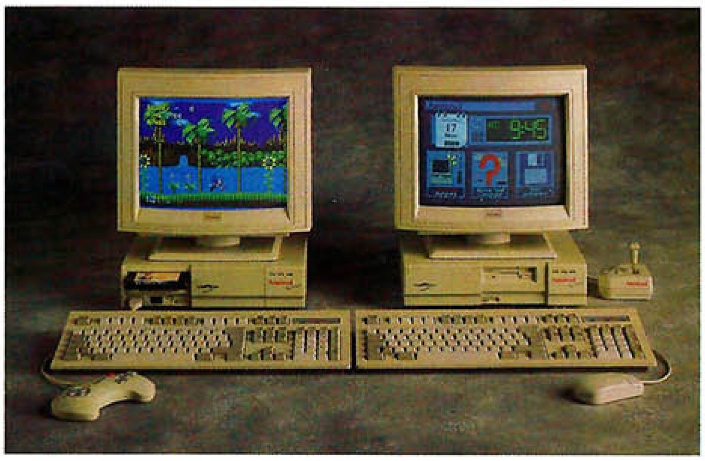
The pad will be on sale at the same time as the cart. There are mumblings of a 1 March release date, but Sega still won't confirm a definite release date or price. More on *Streetfighter 2* on page 28...



Exclusive: Sega's new six-button joypad, for use with *Streetfighter 2.* But will X,Y and Z be used again?



***Streetfighter 2* looks set for a Mega Drive release on 1 March, 1992. Poor old Nintendo, after *all* those TV ads...**



Amstrad's spanking new Mega PC. Amstrad say, "it's the ultimate in games machines. Sega say "we have absolutely nothing to do with it". Strange

AMSTRAD GET SERIOUSLY INTO SEGA

Remember the Teradrive, Sega's Personal Computer with built-in Mega Drive? It was released in Japan just over a year ago to a mediocre response, but it was never deemed suitable for a European appearance – Sega figured that if people wanted a PC, then people would buy one, and Sega wanted to sell consoles to people who wanted to play games.

But now Amstrad are determined to prove Sega's marketing men wrong by releasing their own Mega Drive/PC (cunningly nicknamed the, wait for it... Mega PC) in the UK. £999 will buy you a 386SX PC package (complete with monitor, mouse, joystick and all sorts of other gubbins) that also has a cartridge slot for Mega Drive games.

OK, so it sounds like quite a neat idea, but (and we have to admit that us lot on MEGA would never claim to be PC experts) who is seriously going to buy it? With PC prices tumbling all the time, the PC part of the Mega PC could hardly be described as a bargain at £999, and a Mega Drive costs only £120 anyway – surely people would be better off buying the two separately?

TECH SPEC

Amstrad's Mega PC – The Facts

MODEL: MEGAPC 386SX

PRICE: £999.99 (inc. VAT)

PROCESSOR AND CLOCK SPEED: 25MHz 80386SX (PC Mode) 8Mhz 68000 (Mega Drive mode)

MAIN MEMORY: 1Mb RAM On Board (expandable to 16Mb)

STANDARD HARD DRIVE: 40Mb Hard Drive (28ms access time)

MONITOR: Full colour with stereo

GRAPHICS CAPABILITY: Super VGA

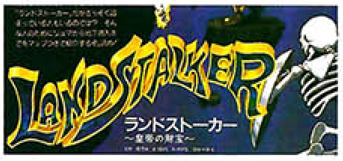
SOUND CAPABILITY: Full Ad-Lib Sound

INCLUDED IN BUNDLE: Mouse, joystick, and Sega joypad

LAND STALKER – BEWARE!

Many importers are currently touting *Land Stalker* as Sega's first 16-Mbit game, and they'd be right. Appearing before *Streets Of Rage 2,* it is (without question) the first 16-Mbit Mega Drive cart. But what's the use of all that memory space when the game's in Japanese? Yep, it's another game to watch out for unless you: a) speak Japanese; b) are provided with English instructions; c) cannot possibly wait a single minute longer for the American version to appear.

You've been warned...


LANDSTALKER
ランドストーカー
～皇帝の財宝～

***Land Stalker:* huge, complex, quite probably very good, but in Japanese**

MEGA CD UPDATE

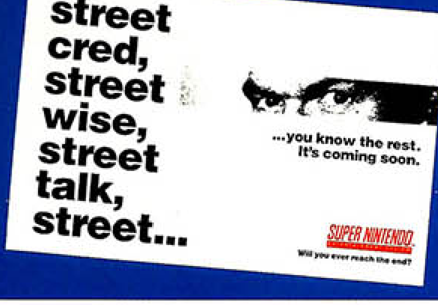
ROAD BLASTER FX

(Virgin)

From Wolfteam, the people who brought you the graphically amazing *Thunderstorm FX,* comes a 3D racing game on the Mega CD. No real details yet, but assuming they haven't been involved in some horrendous accident with the bizarre (and to be quite honest highly unlikely) consequence of them all losing their memory and completely forgetting how to make their games look so darn good, we should be in for a treat. Expect a release sometime soon.

BULL DURHAM'S INCREDIBLE WORLD OF PR AND ADVERTISING

NINTENDO SAYS...



street
cred,
street
wise,
street
talk,
street...

...you know the rest.
It's coming soon.

SUPER NINTENDO

Will you ever reach the end?

MEGA SAYS...

Yep, *Streetfighter 2's* coming soon to the Mega Drive. So what are you trying to say Nintendo? Come on, out with it. Oops, oh no... surely not? You can't really have spent £15 million on an ad campaign only to have it all go horribly wrong on you just before Christmas, can you? Oh, we see – you can.

Bull "bull' Durham

Next month "Bull" Durham will courageously lift the lid off more advertising boo-boos, slight exaggerations, inaccuracies or downright lies.

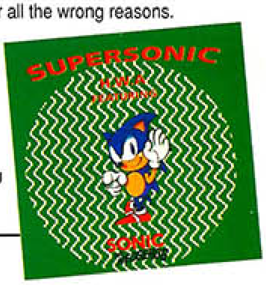
PS. Bull Durham would like to apologise for not making an appearance in last month's MEGA, but he was busy snogging Whitney Houston (or something).

SONIC GETS INTO THE GROOVE!

Hedgehogs With Attitude (HWA) are the "band" responsible for the Sonic single (aka monstrous racket), that, by the time you read this, will either be at the top of the charts or, erm, not.

Sega's marketing department have been claiming for a long time that Sonic will kill Rock 'n' Roll (something to do with the fact that everyone will soon be playing video games instead of listening to music), and now it seems that they were right all along – but for all the wrong reasons.

And here it is: another nail in the coffin of popular music, or the next big thing?



TEN CHANCES TO FEEL WANTED

WIN!

The Powerplay club is open to all Sega players. It offers members cheap carts, a free swap service, regular newsletters and that warm feeling of knowing that they're not alone out there. As a special promotional deal to readers of MEGA, each new member also gets a free Whopper ™ from Burger King – wot a barg missus.

If you fancy winning free membership (normally it costs £11 per annum), then simply answer the following question: Which famous singer, married to Bobby Brown, is currently "in the club"? Send your answers to: I'm a member! MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW before 30 January 1993. For more details about the club, phone (0243) 531 194.

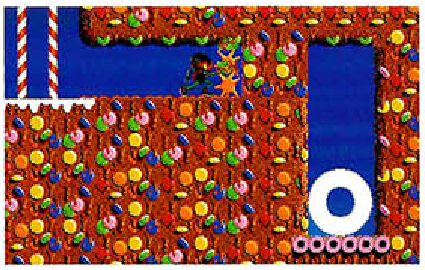
Last of Akira

Yep, this month sees your last chance to get a free copy of the excellent Japanese animated video Akira, when you subscribe to MEGA. Rush to page 92 before it's too late.

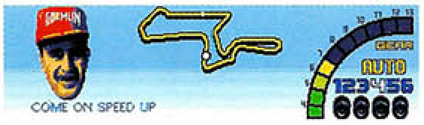
STOP PRESS: SEGA RESTRICT REVIEWS

Sega have stopped sending advance copies of carts to ALL magazines. Instead, we're invited to visit Sega to review the latest stuff. So what? Read from page 38 to find out why this is such a big problem...

WARNING: Gremlins in your console



Amiga hero Zool strutting his six-legged stuff. Out on the Mega Drive some day soon...



Nigel Mansell – driving hero or whingeing git? Luckily his driving game's quite good

Zool is the wacky alien-ant-ninja (Picture the scene: "Hey guys, look, right – we've got this amazing new character concept…" Yep, people get paid for that sort of thing) game which is riding high as the number one game in the home computer Gallup charts, as MEGA goes to press. The news is that Gremlin Graphics is in the process of securing a deal with Sega to bring *Zool* to the Mega Drive next autumn.

Gremlin is the software house originally responsible for *Lotus Turbo Challenge* (published on the Mega Drive by Electronic Arts and earning itself the number 24 slot in the Top 100), but they've also enjoyed considerable success with *Nigel Mansell's World Championship*, a Formula One race-'em-up, which is also likely to appear on the Mega Drive in the not so distant future.

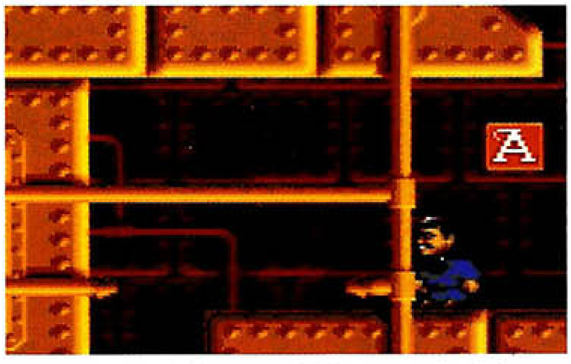
We'll keep you informed of further developments when they happen. In the meantime – welcome aboard Gremlin.

ADDAMS FAMILY ON MEGA DRIVE?

Software publishers Ocean are strenuously denying it, but one of their programmers let slip in a recent interview with our fab sister magazine Super Play (they write about the SNES, but they're nice guys really) that "the first *Addams* has just been converted to Mega Drive".

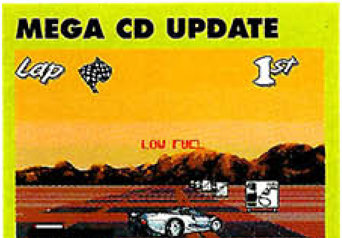
Now, Ocean have a deal with Nintendo prohibiting any Sega publishing, but there's no reason why a product shouldn't be sneaked out the back door and published by someone else. Let's hope that this is the case, because the *Addams Family* was a lovely *Robocod*-style platformer that would suit the Mega Drive perfectly.

Expect the game to appear sometime before the summer. Programmers eh? You can never trust them to keep their bloody mouths shut. (Titter)



***The Addams Family* is a wonderful *Robocod*-style platformer, that might (just might) be out on the Mega Drive in the spring**

MEGA CD UPDATE



JAGUAR
(Virgin)

Enjoyed *Lotus Turbo Challenge?* Well, Core are currently working on converting a similar title for the Mega CD, featuring the gob-smackingly, babe-pullingly lovely Jaguar XJ220. On the Amiga the game never quite managed to match Lotus in terms of seat-of-the-pants enjoyability, but we'll just have to wait and see how Core get on. Due out in the summer of '93.

17-year-old wins £10,000

Lucky git. (Luk-ee git) from Latin: Luckius Gittus, a.k.a Allan Brett from Nottingham (emerged £10,000 richer from the nationwide hunt for the 1993 National Computer Games Championship). Def: "Rich git of much spawniness". Future Entertainment Show report on page 100 of this issue of MEGA...

The Future Entertainment Show

£10,000 for playing games? Eeeee-asy life!

BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY

If you've ever fancied the idea of working in the video game industry, then this little corner of MEGA CITY could help point you in the right direction or just make you think "now why didn't I ever consider doing that?". This month, EASN's resident musical expert, Rob Hubbard.

NO.4: MUSICIAN AND SOUND DESIGNER

NAME: Rob Hubbard

AGE: Thirty-something

JOB DESCRIPTION: Composing sound tracks, sound design (effects and samples) and then programming them into the game. Credits include: *John Madden Football, Lakers vs Celtics, PGA Tour Golf, EA Hockey.*

RELEVANT ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS: Not relevant

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: I have a sound knowledge in music, and I spent years programming home computers. I started playing the piano at the age of six.

PREVIOUS JOBS: Before I joined EA and moved out to California, I programmed music and effects for a variety of software houses in the UK. I was a musician for a long time before I got into computers though.

FIRST BREAK INTO CURRENT JOB: I got into computers because of the programming angle (I wanted to do educational stuff), but that didn't work out, so I got into games. Part and parcel of that was effects and soundtracks, so I combined my two interests. Back in around 1984 there were very few people who could provide software houses with pre-programmed music and effects. I offered a full package and got a lot of work as a result.

GOOD THINGS ABOUT JOB: You're dealing with a constant turnaround of technology. We're currently working with very exciting stuff, such as samples. We're looking forward to the next generation with the Sega CD – eight channels of PCM comes built into the Mega CD, and this makes things a lot more exciting. Living in California isn't so bad either.

BAD THINGS ABOUT JOB: You get some awkward systems to work with sometimes, and working with old systems is boring. Also, it's always a compromise between how much memory space you want for your music and how much is needed for other things. Tight schedules also force compromises.

ADVICE: A background in programming is always going to be an advantage, if only because it gives you an idea of what computers are capable of. But as technology advances, more opportunities arise for more and more people.

CALLING ALL MUSICIANS!

There's a prize on offer for the best song about Paul Mellerick. Send your tapes to MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

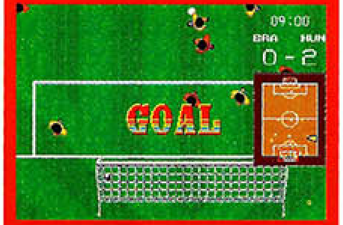
VOYAGE TO THE BOWELS OF THE BACK CATALOGUE

A slightly de-railed philosopher once wrote: "There are some great Mega Drive games, and there are some bad Mega Drive games, but there are no great, bad Mega Drive games". Hmm. Anyway, come with MEGA as we hold our nose and cautiously re-examine...

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90

Now there's a very good reason for dragging this particular skeleton out of the closet – some of you (more moronic) readers are still buying it. It's even in the bloody charts! Why? Let's take a look at the facts.

World Cup Italia '90's only possible justification for existing is the fact that at the time of its release (almost two years ago) there were no footy games on the Mega Drive, but that's no excuse for producing a game which is so monumentally unplayable that it ranks up there with Jimmy Hill in competition for the number one position in the Ten Things Most Likely To Get Football Banned charts.



***World Cup Italia '90*: farcical football of the first degree**

When "playing" *World Cup Italia '90*, it soon becomes apparent that you can't dribble the ball for more than 0.5 seconds without being tackled. The next thing you realise is that you can't pass the ball with any more accuracy than Stevie Wonder plays darts. The result? A desperate, floundering farce in which forward progress can only be achieved by aimlessly wellying the ball in a vaguely goalwards direction as soon as one of your men finds himself in possession.

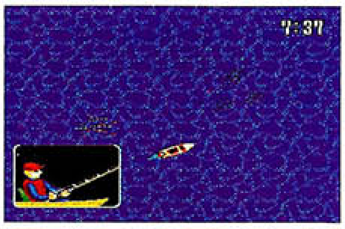
Don't expect any support from the rest of the team; your fellow players sprint desperately around the pitch like headless chickens, apparently as confused as you are. And your trusty defence, who are actually all closet strikers, bugger off up to where the action is at the first sniff of an attacking manoeuvre, leaving your goalie (feeble at the best of times) as the only defence.

The ball appears to be made of concrete (the furthest you can welly it is about ten feet), the pitch is so crammed with players it appears you're playing on a pool table, and by the time you've managed to wrestle control of a player vaguely near the ball from your reluctant Mega Drive, the action's moved on elsewhere.

Finally, a story. A friend of the MEGA team was once challenged to a game, managed to hold the score at 0-0 by halftime, only to have it pointed out that he was, in fact, holding the joypad upside down. Farcical...

KING SALMON: AN APOLOGY

MEGA would like to apologise to all readers who were offended by the review of *King Salmon* last month. It was immature, it was childish, it was (oh sod it), IT WAS IN BLOODY JAPANESE! Actually we're not sorry at all. Look, what good is a Mars Bar to anyone if you can't get the wrapper off? The game was completely unplayable and hence a complete waste of time... (Alright, alright. MEGA CITY is supposed to be news – Ed). OK, the news is that we're getting our hands on the American version next month. We'll review it properly then – you never know, it might actually be quite good.

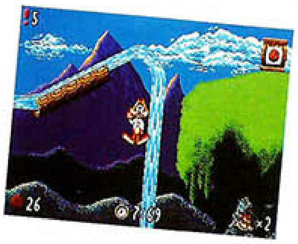


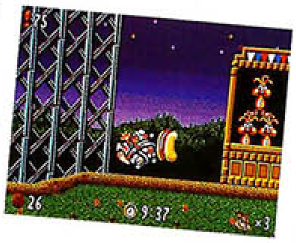
Can a game really be worth 0%? If it's totally unplayable, then we believe there's no point giving it a score. Still, the US version is out soon

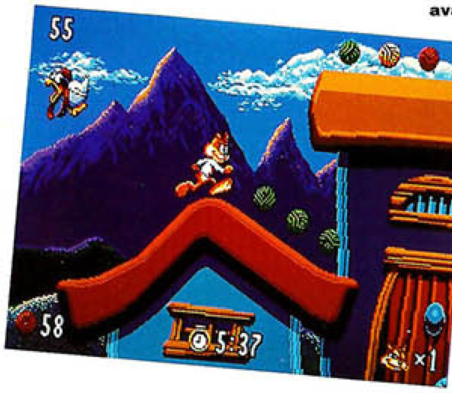
BALLISTIC EMERGE WITH NINE LIVES

Accolade (also known as Ballistic) emerged victorious from their long-fought legal battle with Sega. Basically, they were in trouble not because they were producing Sega games without a licence, but because the Sega logo that appears when a game is loaded into the Mega Drive is officially copyright of Sega – and Ballistic had no right to have this logo appearing on their games.

Anyway, it's all sorted out now, and Ballistic are back in business with the new game *Universal Soldier* (read the review on page 46) and a new game character called Bubsy The Bobcat. Bubsy will star in his first adventure, called *Claws Encounters Of The Furred Kind* (groan), in March. This game is billed by Ballistic as "an interactive cartoon" (translation: great graphics, and erm... that's it?) We'll have to wait and see if it's as bad as it sounds. In the meanwhile, check out some early screenshots...







Now this is a bloody great caption box, so it's going to take not just a little thought to fill – the only raw material available being the fact that Bobcats are "a nocturnal member of the cat family up to one metre in length". Hardly the basis for a caption of these proportions – it's just not going to happen. So, time to resort to the old tried 'n' trusted tactic of using extra-ordinarily interminable, uncharacteristically elongated, fantastically collossal, unnecessarily elephantine words to fill all the space up. See? Easy wasn't it? (You're fired – Neil)

16-BIT
MEGA DRIVE SEGA
MEGA-CD

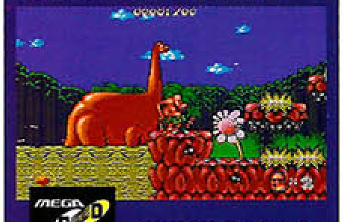
Sega redesign Mega CD for UK

Sega have been busy designing a more compact version of the MEGA CD to complement a redesigned Mega Drive. The new machine will be smaller and perhaps a different colour, and will fit by the side of the Mega Drive as oppose to underneath it. Apparently, the redesign takes advantage of cheaper manufacturing processes in Japan. Whether two MEGA CD's will be launched or the new design will fit both old and new Mega Drives is unclear at the moment, but we'll keep you posted.

INXS ON MEGA CD?

No, it's not a new game (although a rumpy pumpy with Kylie Minogue simulator could possibly have its points of interest), but just news of a new CD&G title which will work on your Mega CD. CD&G (Compact Disc and Graphics) titles are standard music compact discs that also have graphics (usually lyric sheets or stills of the band), which, if you're playing the disc through a Mega CD of similar CD-Rom, are displayed while the music plays. If more appear (our contact ominously mentioned Bobby Brown), we'll let you know.

MEGA CD UPDATE



CHUCK ROCK 2

(Sega)

Everyone's favourite caveman (oh, except of course the gone-but-not-forgotten Captain Caveman, and Raquel Welch in Ten Million Years BC, but then she wasn't strictly a caveman, was she? Anyway, we digress...) will soon be back on the Mega CD. There's no news as to who's actually publishing the game, but Core Design, who programmed the original, are working on this extended version as we speak.

Harr-harr-HAAAAAARRRRR me hearties!

We at the MEGA office do like pirates, so it's with great pleasure that we hear that *Pirate's Gold* is soon to be released for the Mega Drive in the USA.

Based on the successful Microprose PC game *Pirates!*, *Pirate's Gold* puts you in the leather booties, billowing shirt and slightly effeminate hair-do of a 17th century buccaneer.

This game, which is part strategy, part war game and part arcade action, should be available on import very soon.

GET INTO SEGA GEAR

Sega go the whole hog with a new range of *Sonic 2* bits and pieces

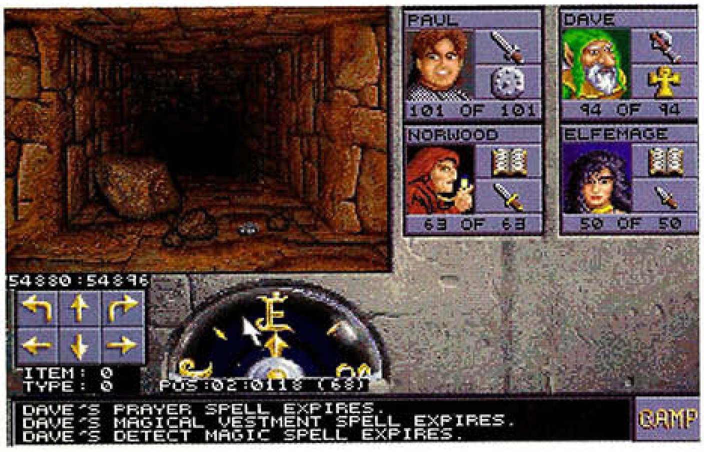
Sonic 2 jackets, badges, watches, fluffy toys, mugs, calenders, wall-hangers and T-shirts will soon be available at a video game outlet near you. Now don't anybody accuse Sega of not making huge wodges of cash when given half an opportunity, OK? No, we won't hear anything of the sort. (And no, we don't have any "free samples" so don't bother picking up that phone.)

Simultaneous six-player games?

Electronic gadgetry leads (no pun intended) to more players

American games developers Tengen are currently working on a special adaptor, which will enable six players to participate in a game at the same time. The adaptor plugs into one of the Mega Drive's two joypad ports, and up to three joypads can be plugged into each adaptor – so two adaptors (one in each of the Mega Drive's joypad ports) mean up to six players.

The adaptor is a spin off of Tengen's new range of Mega Drive multi-player games, the first of which will be a conversion of Atari's classic *Gauntlet* coin-op.



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DAVE'S PRAYER SPELL EXPIRES.
DAVE'S MAGICAL VESTMENT SPELL EXPIRES.
DAVE'S DETECT MAGIC SPELL EXPIRES.
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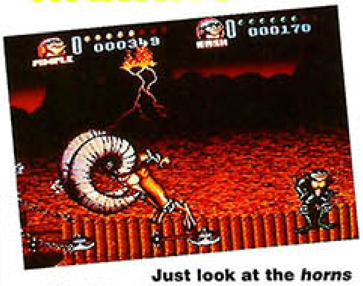
Eye Of The Beholder

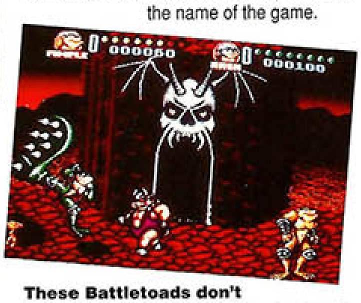
Due out soon on Mega Drive is *the* gargantuan RPG which wowed PC owners with stunning (*Shining In The Darkness*-style) graphics, incredible depth of gameplay, and a real tough challenge. Grab that axe…

BATTLETOADS: AN EARLY WARTING



Just look at the *horns* on him! Meanwhile, Mr Battletoad just waits and croaks

Not only is this little news "piecette" noteworthy for kicking off with perhaps MEGA's most appalling pun to date (and let's face it, it's up against some pretty stiff opposition), but it's also announcing the fact that *Battletoads*, one of the better Nintendo games, is due for a Mega Drive appearance sometime in '93. Solid toad-'em-up action is the name of the game.



These Battletoads don't seem to actually do much, do they? This one's just standing around

MEGA READER AWARDS!

Just to prove there's a bit of Terry Wogan in all of us, MEGA is holding a reader award ceremony (hopefully next month) as part of a nostalgic look back at 1992. We know which games we think were the best of '92, but will you agree?

Here are the categories:
1. Best sports game
2. Best platform game
3. Best shoot-'em-up
4. Best beat-'em-up
5. Best software house
6. Best Mega Drive game overall

Now's your chance to let us know. Send your nominations in ASAP for each of the categories to: "Sweden? Sweden? Are you there Sweden? Oh dear, back to Terry…" MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

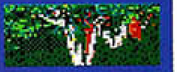
Yes, there is a prize to be given to the entry with the most imaginative, witty and original completion to the tiebreaker. It is to be answered in less than 20 words and here it comes: "My idea of heaven is a night with Amanda Dyson in a custard factory because…"

THE QS IN THE NEWS!

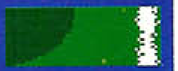
Are you a Mega Drive expert? Or are you to Mega Drive related braininess what Take That! is to music lovers? Well, now's the time to find out once and for all. Yes, it's time to put the old grey matter to the test and cheat by "accidentally" reading the "As on the back page" (page 106) before absent-mindedly suggesting a quick (just for fun, of course) quiz with a mate. Here goes:

1. On 24 November, *Sonic 2* was launched worldwide. What nickname was given to the day?
2. Tails is called two tails because he has (quite logically) got two tails. But has he got two bums? (And yes, we've checked)
3. MEGA goes on sale on the third Thursday of every month. True or false?
4. What's the name of the player who features in both Sega's and EASN's Ice Hockey games?
5. How many Mega Drive games feature Mickey Mouse? Name them.
6. How many Mega Drive games feature James Pond? Name them.
7. How many Mega Drive games feature (even if only for a short period of time) Sonic The Hedgehog?
8. What's the name of the group who've released a Sonic single?
9. How many events are there in *Olympic Gold?*
10. What's the name of the ninja hero in *Revenge Of Shinobi* and *Shadow Dancer?*
11. How does the Michael Jackson character turn into a robot in *Moonwalker?*
12. What's the name of the frog in *The Aquatic Games?*
13. In what year did the Mega Drive first officially go on sale in the UK?
14. Complete the once-famous catchphrase: "Do me a favour…"
15. Which is the odd game out?
Ayrton Senna's Super Monaco GP 2
John Madden '93
Phantasy Star 3
PGA Tour Golf
Streets Of Rage

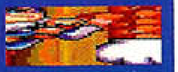
16. Which game is this knackered screenshot from?



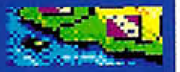
17. Which game is this nobbled screenshot from?



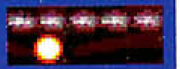
18. Which game is this scrunged screenshot from?



19. Which game is this crap screenshot from?



20. Which game is this zoomed-in-on screenshot from?



OK, so you've got to the end of the Qs In The News. Now get to the end of the magazine to find the As on the back page and discover how well you did, unless you've been cheating all along.

THE CHARTS

When we compiled these charts *Sonic 2* wasn't yet released. What position will it enter at next month? The best guess wins absolutely bugger all...

OFFICIAL TOP 20

This month | Last month | Game Name | MEGA Top 100 Position

① ■(01) Euro Club Soccer M 90
Well, this not-too-bad footy game seems to have gone down a storm with the punters. It's still riding high at number one

② ■(NE) NHLPA Hockey M 03
This one got rave reviews all over the place so it's no wonder it's shot straight in at such a high position. Wait for *Sonic 2* though

③ ■(NE) Speedball 2 M 31
The classic future sport simulation got MEGA all excited a couple of months back. Looks like you lot feel the same way

④ ▼(03) Taz-Mania M 21
The brilliant Saturday morning cartoon makes an equally brilliant Mega Drive game. Go and check it out, now!

⑤ ▼(02) Alien 3 M 79
A pretty good platform game, that seems to be doing surprisingly well in the charts. It *has* started to drop now though

⑥ ▼(05) Monaco GP2 M 05
Race freaks won't be at all surprised to see this one doing so well. It is rather fab after all. And it's got Ayrton Senna in it

⑦ ▼(06) Desert Strike M 17
Electronic Arts come up trumps again with this arcade shooter based in the Gulf. It's been out a while now, but it's still holding its own

⑧ ▲(13) Alex Kidd Castle M —
Er, what's this all about then? Well, MEGA isn't quite sure really, but it must be pretty good. It's a platformer no doubt. Um...

⑨ ■(09) Italia '90 M —
Italia '90 is a truly dire football game. So why on earth are you all still buying it? Good lord. Sometimes, just sometimes, we despair

⑩ ■(10) Super Hang On M 60
This old but fabby racer is now being sold as a budget title. And all you Mega Drive owners seem to be lapping it up. Cheap 'n' cheery

This month	Last month	Game Name	MEGA Top 100 Position
⑪	▼(04)	**Terminator**	M 43
⑫	■(NE)	**Greendog**	M —
⑬	▼(12)	**PGA Tour Golf**	M 12
⑭	■(14)	**Streets Of Rage**	M 07
⑮	■(NE)	**Corporation**	M 72
⑯	■(NE)	**Splatterhouse 2**	M —
⑰	▼(11)	**Super Thunderblade**	M —
⑱	▼(16)	**Road Rash**	M 10
⑲	▼(08)	**Dragon's Fury**	M 51
⑳	▼(07)	**Bulls Vs Lakers**	M 49

SOLD!

Alex is 18 and, looky here, he's just bought a copy of *The Terminator*

Gosh! Carlos of Kent has bought *Sonic*, and he's only 12

By 'eck! This stout lass plumped for *Chuck Rock*. It's Kelly, 13, of Kent

And to top it all, 11-year-old Chris, again from Kent, fancied a bit of *Madden '92*. Another month, another sad collection of fame-seeking unfortunates

Official charts compiled by **Gallup** and sponsored by Penguin. Import charts compiled by **Whizz-Kid Games**

IMPORT TOP 20

This month | Last month | Game Name | MEGA Top 100 Position

① ■(01) Lemmings M 06
This too is arguably one of the best Mega Drive games ever. It is just as brilliant as all the other console versions that have been done

② ■(NE) LHX Chopper M 26
Oh gawd, "Electronic Arts in really rather popular game shocker". It's a helicopter combat game and, er, it's pretty good

③ ■(03) NHLPA Hockey M 03
This one is doing well in both the official charts and in the import chart. People just can't seem to get enough of the bally thing

④ ■(NE) Speedball 2 M 31
Isn't it annoying how these games appear in both charts? It means I have to keep repeating myself all the bloody time

⑤ ▼(04) Dragon's Fury M 51
Ah that's better. This excellent pinball game has features coming out of its ears, plus a few bonus screens too. Great stuff

⑥ ▲(14) Greendog M —
After a slow start, we're reliably informed that sales of *Greendog* are improving. Shame it ain't much cop then, isn't it?

⑦ ▲(08) Wd Trophy Soccer M 90
This is the American version of *Euro Club Soccer*. Same graphics, same gameplay, different tournaments

⑧ ▼(02) Alien 3 M 79
Blast, just when it was beginning to get better. This one's in the official chart too. It's a platform game of the film, that's it

⑨ ■(NE) Rampart M —
This has only just been released on import and already it's shot straight in at number nine. But then you can see that, can't you?

⑩ ■(NE) Steel Talons M —
Classy coin-op gets converted to the Mega Drive and doesn't quite work. Doesn't stop it selling rather well though, does it?

This month	Last month	Game Name	MEGA Top 100 Position
⑪	▲(13)	**Chuck Rock**	M 66
⑫	■(NE)	**Capriati Tennis**	M —
⑬	▼(11)	**Splatterhouse 2**	M —
⑭	▼(05)	**Cybercop**	M 72
⑮	▲(18)	**Aquatic Games**	M 55
⑯	■(NE)	**Rolling Thunder 2**	M —
⑰	■(NE)	**RBI 4**	M —
⑱	▼(06)	**Predator 2**	M —
⑲	▼(09)	**Taz-Mania**	M 21
⑳	■(NE)	**Cadash**	M —

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	NEW	USED
NHLPA 93	34.99	24.99
OLYMPIC GOLD	34.99	24.99
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POPULOUS	29.99	19.99
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REVENGE OF SHINOBI	26.99	22.99
SUPER OFF ROAD	29.99	19.99
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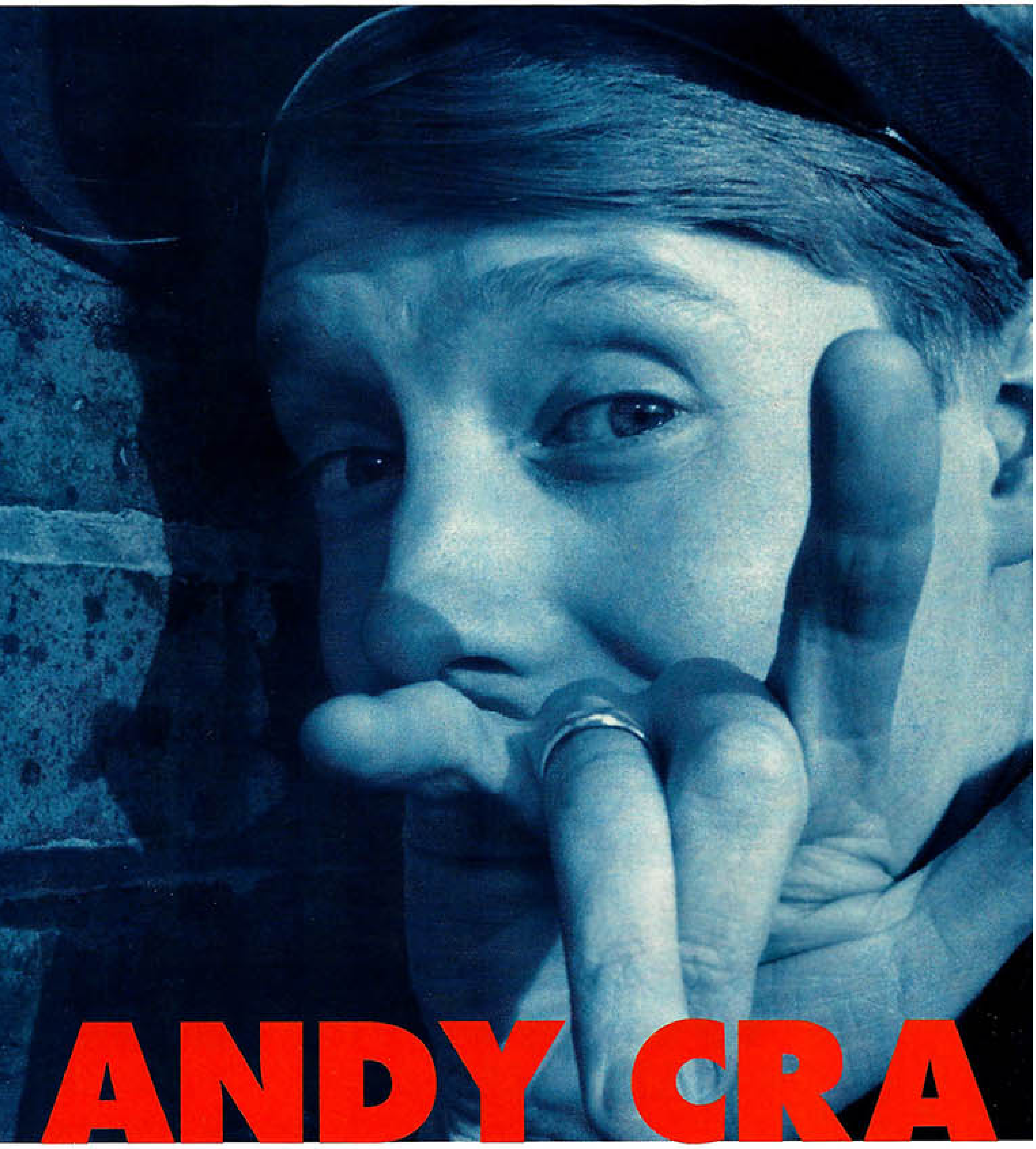
So is ANDY CRA just in it for the mone

Bad Influence! is ITV's answer to Gamesmaster, and it brings with it two new TV presenters. Now, Violet Berlin is a respectable video games' journalist (yes, funny concept isn't it?), but what of Andy Crane? Does he know anything about video games? Does it really matter if he doesn't? And why the hell is he always so bloody nice? Neil West probes the children's chum...

It's freezing cold outside, and Andy Crane is itching to get back to rehearsals for his other TV show, Saturday morning's What's Up Doc? We've scuppered his lunch hour, gazzumped his chances of getting through '92 without catching pneumonia, and now Jude (MEGA's tame photographer) is asking him to perform all sorts of bizarre contortions against the back wall of TVS's studios in Kent. But he's still smiling!

So, let's kick things off nice and gently: why has ITV taken so long to get into this video game business then?



Andy Crane and Violet Berlin (she changed her name after the German borders came down – she used to be called Violent Beril) come over all cheesy for Bad Influence!

"The idea of a TV video game show has been scuttling around the corridors of power at children's television for a very long time, but men in suits take a lot of convincing. There's always a hard-core minority (such as you guys on magazines) for any cult trend, who are banging on doors for years and years trying to get things started by saying, 'This is going to happen, this is really going to happen'. And for every ten guys who bang on your door, two or three of them are vindicated in years to come – their predictions proving to become supremely popular. The others are proved wrong, but in TV you can't afford to take chances – hence the wait."

So video games have finally made it big-time?

"Yep, and I think it's an opportunity for them to justify themselves and clear themselves of the endless bloody criticism that 'they're turning the nation into zombies' – now TV can put things straight. Putting video games on telly perhaps makes the whole business a little safer. If good ol' wholesome children's ITV deems it suitable to put a program on about computer games, then computer games must be alright."

NE
y?

Good stuff – Andy Crane's on our side. And as a TV happenin' rock-steady dude (Hey! Getting into children's TV speak here – hope you appreciate it), does Andy Crane reckon this video game thang will go all the way? Music sales are plummeting, video games are on the up and up, and it's a known fact that a lot of people in the record industry are very, very worried about how people's tastes are changing. Will *Sonic The Hedgehog* killed Rock 'n' Roll (man)?

"Nah, one will not take over from the other. Modern technology simply means that the barriers between different forms of entertainment are becoming less defined. You can watch TV on your Game Gear, you can play Dire Straits on your CD Rom – for God's sake there's a single out featuring Mario. Now that's a bit frightening, isn't it?" (Tell us about it)

"Inevitably the two mediums are just getting closer together, but with the greatest respect to Mega Drive, SNES and Amiga, they can never replace listening to the radio or watching television."

> **"While I don't claim to be Dominik Diamond, I do have to know what the games are all about"**

THE COUNTRY'S MOST FAMOUS VIDEO GAMES' PLAYER?

Well that was all very easy – let's talk about something a little more controversial: Dominik Diamond.

In a couple of months, Andy Crane will probably have taken Dominik's crown as the country's most high-profile gamesplayer, and that (whether he likes it or not) makes him a spokesman for gamesplayers in the UK...

"No, it doesn't. I'm a TV presenter."

But that's not how most people will see him. He's that guy with the video games...

"No hang-on. Let's get this straight. I haven't set myself up as a spokesman by any means. Dominik is a self-appointed spokesman of a generation. I don't claim to be Bob Dylan."

But Dominik didn't set out on some videogaming ego-trip crusade – people came to him...

"Well your magazine described him as a 'self-appointed spokesman...'" (No we didn't) "...which implies that he said, 'I'm going to be a spokesman, I'm going to get out there and argue the case for gamesplayers'".

No, Dominik Diamond has been prepared to open his mouth when it's been needed – and all credit to him.

"Well, OK. So with the first series of Gamesmaster he became synonymous with gamesplaying, so when some aunt-mother-doctor-psychologist started having a go, news programs needed a counter argument and who was it to come from? Dominik was the obvious choice..."

Exactly. But now there's a good chance that the "obvious choice" is going to be a certain Mr Andrew Crane. And the question is – will he speak for all us lot like Dominik does? After all he has described himself as "an excellent TV presenter, who happens to have a passing interest in computers". But is he just in this Bad Influence! lark for the fame, glamour, babes and money?

"No, that's not entirely fair."

So would Andy Crane publicly make a stand against those who argue against video games?

"Erm... Yes, I'd defend video games. But I'd qualify it with a desire for people to do all sorts of other social activities as well. I have to be up on video games, and while I don't claim to be Dominik Diamond, I have to know what the games are about. I enjoy playing them, but I can't claim to be part of a youth culture when I'm 28 years old."

But he wouldn't agree with those who reckon playing video games turns people into zombies, would he?

"No not at all..." (Good man) "I'm sure that there are some very sad video games people around, but to make such a broad sweeping statement about the whole of the gaming population is ridiculous. Anyway, there have been people like Will Carling, who endorse the playing of video games – he's got a Game Gear. Besides, computers can do a lot of good. I'm personally very excited about the use of Virtual Reality to give handicapped kids the chance to move around an albeit artificial world. Sure, the technology is primitive at the moment, but the possibilities are amazing."

> **"Maybe that's the secret, maybe all presenters of video game shows have to have blonde hair! There's me, Violet and Dominik! *Spooky.*" (That's Dyer's TV hopes dashed)**

This brings us nicely to the differences between Bad Influence! and Gamesmaster. Bad Influence! is a computer (not just video games, oh, no, no, no – perish the thought) show, hence it can cover stuff like the possible uses of VR. Gamesmaster, however, is content to use VR purely for a challenge or two. Presumably Andy Crane approves of this and rates Bad Influence! as a much better TV show. (Standby for politically ambiguous wibbly answer)

BAD INFLUENCE! VERSUS GAMESMASTER

"I don't think you can compare the two shows. For a start, they're aimed at completely different audiences." (Told you)

Oh, come on though, with TV coverage of video games being as limited as it is, people with an interest will watch whatever they can. Surely Gamesmaster and Bad Influence! attract the same audience?

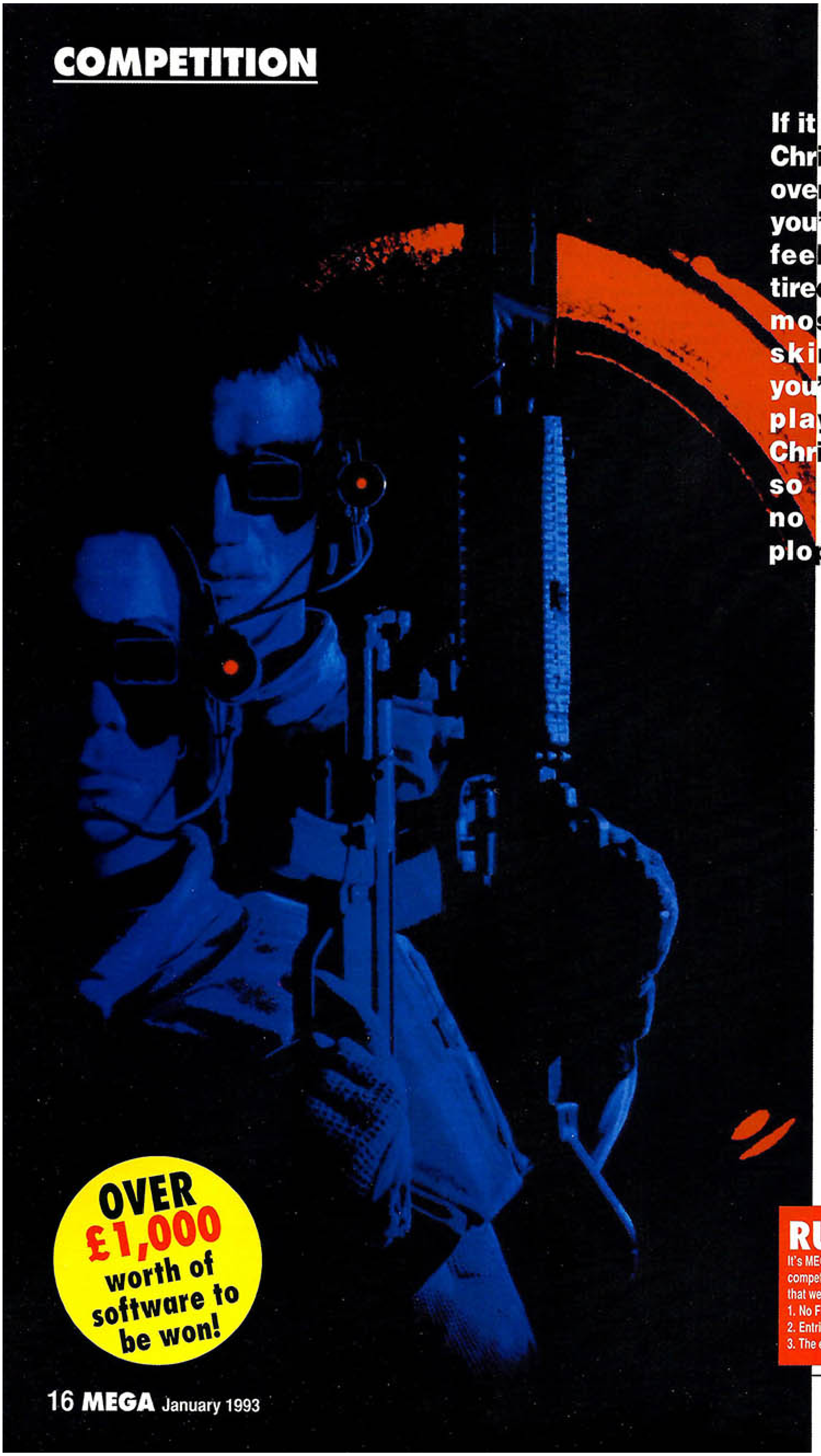
"OK, I suppose it's inevitable that the hard-core audience will watch both, but due to the different timings and the fact that, with the greatest respect, Channel 4 is still a specialist channel so it has different audiences. So, if you're a real gamesplayer, you'll probably make more of an effort to turn on and watch Gamesmaster. I think Bad Influence! is a program which you might run into accidentally and then might stick with even if you're not a hard-core gamesplayer."

But will the public stick with Bad Influence!? Only the viewing figures will tell the whole story. But with the BBC, ITV's up 'n' coming breakfast TV show and Sky TV finally getting in on this video game act, it looks like us videogamers will soon get the choice of TV shows we deserve. Until then, you can take comfort in the knowledge that television's "men in suits" acknowledge that we've been right all along. Ⓜ

Andy Crane: children's chum, ex-best friend to a green duck, ex-presenter of the Travel Show, ex-presenter of Motormouth and now video game expert?

STAY TUNED...

BBC2 gets into Virtual Reality when Craig Charles presents the first edition of Cyberzone (a Virtual Reality game show).



OVER £1,000 worth of software to be won!

If it isn't already, Christmas will soon be over. And when it is, you'll no doubt be feeling very ill, very tired, very fat and most importantly, very skint. What's more, you'll have been playing your Christmas Sega carts so much that you'll no doubt be bored plop-less with them...

Ballistic to the rescue. What better way to spice up the post-crimble lull than to win five, yes five, cartridges? We've got six sets of five carts to give away plus 25 *Universal Soldier* posters courtesy of Ballistic. That's over £1,000 worth of software up for grabs. If you win, you can look forward to playing *Universal Soldier, The Games: Winter Challenge, Super Off Road, Test Drive 2* and last (and quite probably least, but it's free so who cares) *Double Dragon.*

Righty ho then, to win all this glorious booty, all we want you to do is answer a few simple questions. They are as follows:

① Name two Jean Claude Van Damme films other then Universal Soldier.

② In which film did Dolph Lundgren co-star with Sylvester Stallone?

③ Name Dolph Lundgren's famous ex-girlie. (Clue: she appeared in a Bond Movie)

Good. When you've worked out the answers, write them on the back of a postcard or a sealed envelope then send them to "Dolph and Jean, turn me on" Compo, P O Box 10, Sunderland, SR4 6SN, to arrive before 31 January, 1993.

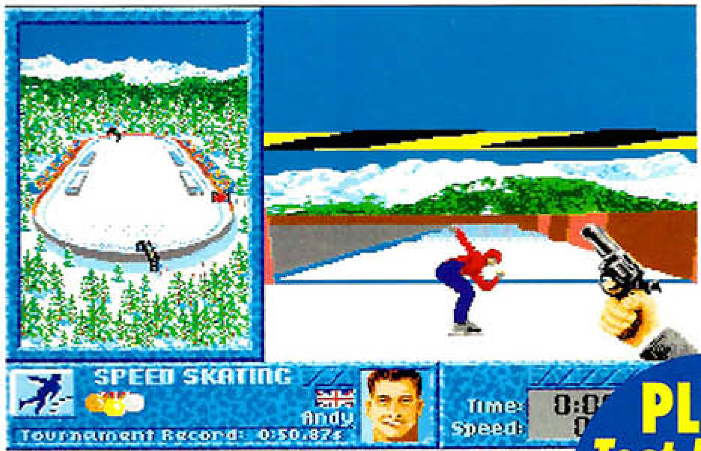
(Write your name, age and address on the postcard and "NO" if you don't wish to receive direct mail from selected companies)

RULES

It's MEGA's new year's resolution to keep all our competitions rule-free. The only problem being, of course, that we can't. It's simply not allowed. So here they are:

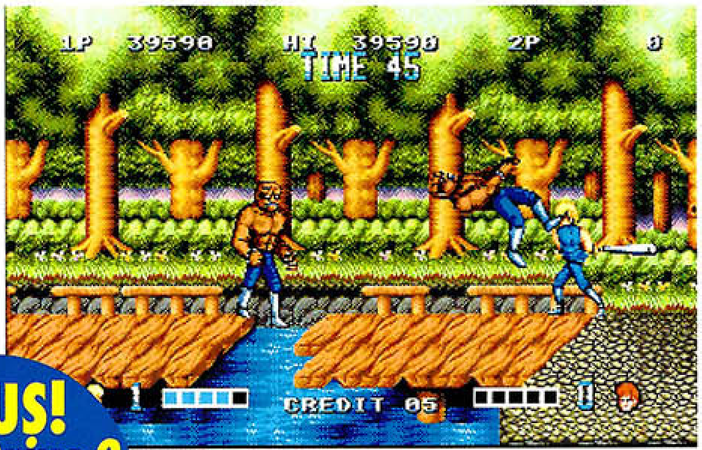
1. No Future Publishing or Accolade employees can enter
2. Entries must be in by 31 January, 1993, at the latest
3. The editor's decision is to stop the rules now

WIN SOME STONKING SOFTWARE!

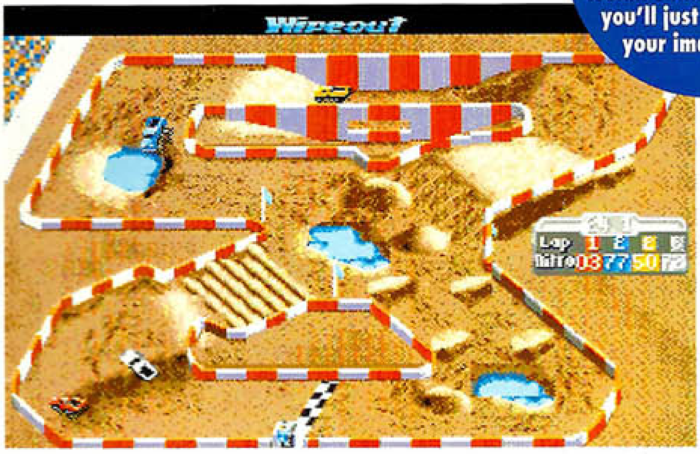

SPEED SKATING
Andy
Time:
Speed:
Tournament Record: 0:50.87s

Oh my god. An assassin is about to shoot that speed skater in *The Games: Winter Challenge*. "Oi, RUN, GET AWAY, QUICK!" Damn, I'd better call the guards, um, er... (Berk – Neil)

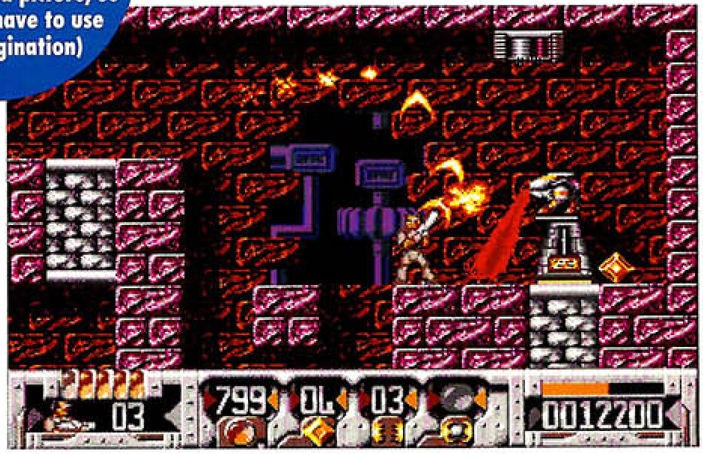
PLUS!
Test Drive 2
(except, of course, we couldn't find a picture, so you'll just have to use your imagination)


1P 39590
HI 39590
2P 0
TIME 45
CREDIT 05

As the fat bloke floats menacingly above the gap in the bridge, our hero kicks the crap out of his equally rotund twin brother. Yes you've guessed it, it's *Double Dragon*


Wipeout
Lap
Nitro

Super Off Road is a curious dirt track race game. It's all very bumpy and bizarre and when playing against a friend it's an absolute riot. You could be racing away with your very own copy of the game if you enter this month's compo


03
799
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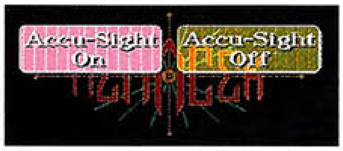
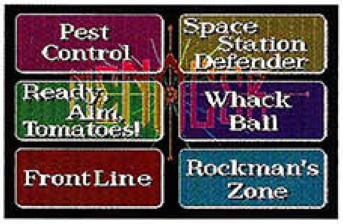
Universal Soldier is Ballistic's latest Mega Drive game. It's an enormous platform blaster based on the film of the same name, which stars Dolph Lundgren. One of six copies of this game could be yours

THE MENAC

It's big, it's plastic, and Paul Mellerick has finally got his hands on it. Yes, you've guessed it, the Menacer has arrived. It's the monster everyone hoped it would be; it's just a shame that Sega couldn't have devised some better software to accompany this light gun's launch



This screen appears before each game. Choose the Accu-Sight; it makes life a helluva lot easier



These are the six games. What a pity the majority of them are nob

A light gun? What the hell is it? How does it work? Does it use batteries or will it work from the mains? Can you use it to open a tin of baked beans? Questions, questions, questions. Ever since someone mentioned that Sega were bringing out a light gun people have been jumping up and down in anticipation of finding out more about it. Well, MEGA's now got hold of a Menacer, and it's time to spill the beans.

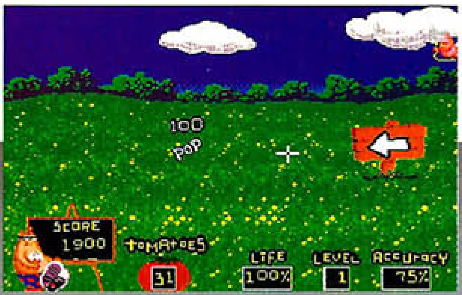
OK, so what exactly is a light gun? Well, a light gun, is a... er, light gun. You point it at the screen and press the fire button. The receiver (plugged into the second joystick port) detects the light signal and blows up whatever it is you are aiming at (if you were actually aiming at something). The technicalities are very complicated, but all you really need to know is that it works and it is deadly accurate.

The gun comes in three parts, and you can assemble them to suit your own personal requirements.

The most exciting thing about the gun is the Accu-Sight. You can choose this option before you start any game, and it eliminates the need to squint down the binocular-type sights. When using the Accu-Sight a small cursor appears on screen enabling you to target with pin-point accuracy.

This is by far the most user-friendly way to use the Menacer, and MEGA suggests that you don't even think about trying to use the eye sights; they're difficult to set up and are just too much of a strain on the eyes.

What else can we say about the Menacer? It works well (as long as you use the Accu-Sight) and it's easy to hold. It's a shame, therefore, that the games which come with Sega's initial package just aren't up to standard.



THE TOMATO GAME

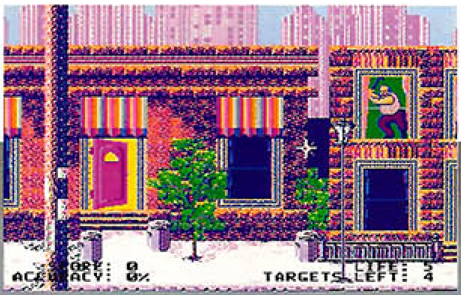
Ever since screenshots of this game were published people have been asking whether it is in fact *Toe Jam & Earl 2*. Well it isn't, it's just a spin-off of the original game and it's quite a good one at that.

The game idea is simple: the screen scrolls left to right and various enemies from the original game appear on screen. Target them and let fire with a tomato. If you hit them, you'll get some points, and you need a certain number of points to get through the level.

As you progress, the scrolling gets faster, but you can also pick up power-ups to help you along your way. The game is further helped along by the fact that you automatically lock on to your target when you're near it. This means you don't spend loads of time trying to get pin-point accuracy.

The Tomato Game is fun and strange, so *Toe Jam & Earl* fans won't be disappointed. However, the nature of the game means that after 20 goes it all becomes rather repetitive.

OVERALL RATING 62%



ROCKMAN'S ZONE

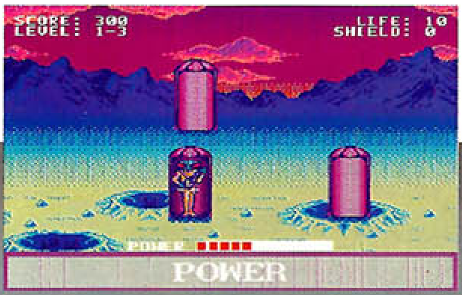
Ever wanted to get on a firing range like the ones you see in American cop TV shows, and shoot all those innocent mothers carrying their children? Yes? Well join the club, because now, thanks to Sega, you can.

The idea is again simple. The screen scrolls through a street showing a row of houses, and at various intervals a target appears. If it's a hoodlum, shoot it; if it's an innocent bystander, don't.

If you hit a goody or miss a target completely, you lose a life. Lose all you lives and it's game over. The longer you keep going, the more points you get. Sorted.

The graphics are very bland and two-dimensional, but the scrolling is smooth. The action is very slow and you tend to spend such a long time waiting for something to appear that when it does, whether it's an innocent bystander or not, you shoot at it. All in all, this is not a very inspiring game.

OVERALL RATING 51%



SPACE STATION DEFENDER

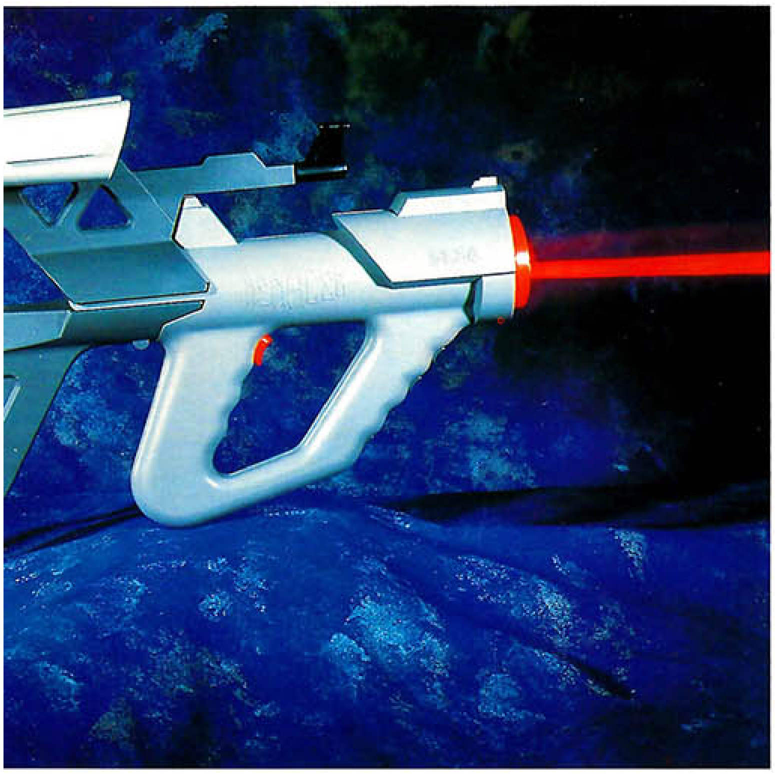
Now the trouble with games which are packaged with a light gun is that some of them are incredibly daft. *Space Station Defender* is just one such example.

It's a cross between *The Tomato Game* and a memory test in which you have to remember what appeared when and where. There are eight parts to each level.

Eight pods appear and you've got to shoot them before they shoot you. You start by seeing one pod. Destroy it and then it reappears, and so does a second one. This goes on and on until there are eight pods. Destroy these eight and move onto the next level.

And that's all there is to it. Very simple gameplay matched with simple graphics and sound, means that you won't be playing this for very long.

OVERALL RATING 40%



THE FUTURE

OK, so you've checked out the six games (if you haven't, see below) and they're all pretty meagre. In all fairness though, when a company launches a new piece of hardware it doesn't necessarily have to spend loads of time creating software, because that's after all the job of the software companies. So, let's have a look at what some of the software houses have got lined up, or not as the case may be, for the Menacer.

Flying Edge is the first company to get the ball rolling by making *Terminator 2* compatible with the gun (see review on page 46 of this issue of MEGA). Apparently there's more software to follow, although at this stage Flying Edge won't yet say exactly what it is.

More exciting though is the news that Probe Software (the people who programmed *Terminator 2*) are working on a completely original game, and although it's still in the early stages, glimpses of it suggest that it should be a cracker.

Virgin and Electronic Arts claim not to have anything lined up at the moment, but they are "interested". What nobody's doubting is that the Menacer is going to be big and if Sega get their act together, you might even see some CD compatible games sooner or later. Expect to read more about this piece of hardware in a future issue of MEGA. Ⓜ

MENACER™
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PUBLISHER: Sega

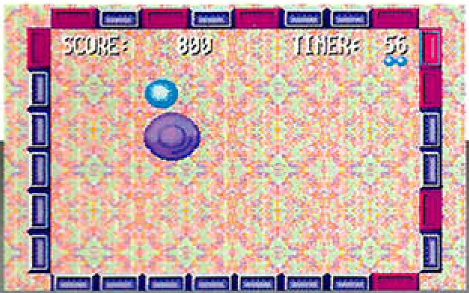
PRICE: £59.99

RELEASE: Out now

CONTACT: Sega 071 727 8070

"The gun is great, but the software just doesn't live up to expectation. If you're interested in buying this light gun, wait until some other compatible games are released – currently, there aren't enough on the market to justify the 60 quid"

ER IS HERE!



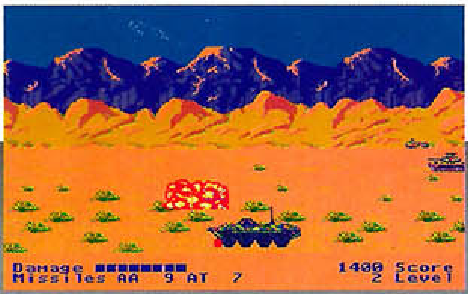
WHACK BALL

What do you get if you cross an old coin-op game called *Breakout* with a light gun? *Whack Ball*, that's what. That about sums up this game, and as you have probably already guessed, it is a very poor game indeed.

Using the gun, you control a big round ball-type object with which you must guide another smaller ball around the screen. Bounce the smaller ball into the bricks to change their colour. Do this to all the bricks surrounding you and you'll move onto the next, strangely familiar, level. Various power-ups and penalties can also be found by hitting flashing blocks, but after you've played the first three levels it all becomes very samey and very easy indeed. The only way you can die (if you can call it dying) is by guiding the smaller ball through a hole on the later levels.

The graphics are OK as is the sound, but again you just aren't going to be playing this for more than an hour.

OVERALL RATING 31%



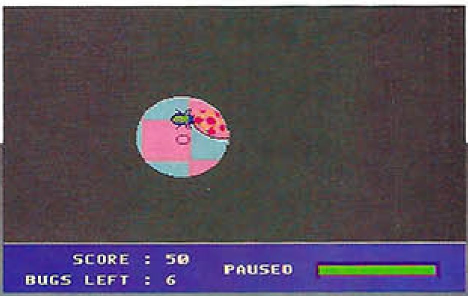
FRONT LINE

Once those crap games start coming there's no stopping them, is there? *Front Line* is a simple enough game (and it shows), which has been badly programmed and which has the appearance of having never met up with a gamestester.

You must take out as many tanks, aircraft, personnel carriers and anything else that comes along as fast as possible, making sure you don't get hit in the process. You've got your standard machine gun to protect you and a pretty good missile to boot, but the enemy has some pretty awesome firepower too.

The sprites are detailed, but the scenery is bland and the action non-existent. The very simple fire, fire and fire some more gameplay is extremely repetitive and not to mention very easy. If this is the Menacer's equivalent of a shoot-'em-up, then MEGA don't particularly want to see any others. The Mega Drive has too many of these already and this addition is truly awful.

OVERALL RATING 19%



PEST CONTROL

And here it is, the worst game you get when (or if) you buy the Menacer, and boy is it bad. The whole idea of the game is to stop cockroaches and various other horrible little insects from eating your pizza. Now if that's not a disgusting idea for a game, then perhaps you could tell us what is?

Only a very small portion of the screen is in view at any one time, and you have to move this small circle around the screen until you highlight a bit with a cockroach in it. When you do, fire at it. Be careful though, because the bugs are moving all the time. Destroy all the cockroaches and you move up a level, where even bigger and nastier enemies come to attack you.

It's all very samey and boring, and after a very short while you'll just give up, not because it's too tough, but just because it's too dull. Don't even bother to load this game up – believe me, it's just not worth the time or effort.

OVERALL RATING 12%

Which will be the biggest Mega Drive games of next year? When will Mega CD games start to make use of the machine's capabilities? And will 1993 bring a change in the style of games or yet more sequels? MEGA brings you the definitive (and occasionally philosophical) preview guide to 1993...

MEGA-CD
SEGA
VOLUME
POWER
ON
OFF
RESET

SO WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IN 1993?

It's good to hear what Sega Europe's boss Nick Alexander has to say about streamlining Sega's software output. With a library of back catalogue games now almost reaching the 300 mark (including grey imports), gamesplayers have had all the platformers, shoot-'em-ups and basketball sims (six of them!?) they'll ever need. Now it's time to spend more time on fewer titles and make sure that the programming teams really get to make the most use of what they've learnt over the last couple of years.

This is the start of our biggest ever previews section. We pick out all the big name games for 1993 that we can get our hands on as well as compile a huge previews diary. So let's kick things off straight away with a look at what Mega CD games we can expect to see appearing over the next six months (and if you're worried that the Mega CD games may never reach their full potential read our special report on Psygnosis, starting over the page). Read on...

AFTERBURNER III (Sega)

Could this be the game that the Mega CD was invented for? Using filled-in polygon graphics, sprite rotation, full-effect custom sprite-scaling, this could turn out to be a game that'll sell Mega CDs faster than Kim Basinger taking up streaking would sell camcorders. Due out sometime real soon, the game will stay fairly faithful to its coin-op roots – we can't think of anything better.

16-BIT
POWER — ON
MEGA DRIVE SEGA
READY
COMPACT disc
CD ACCESS

SECOND GENERATION OF SOFTWARE?

All the games producers are confident that the "console boom" has yet to reach its peak and that the Mega Drive will continue to sell incredibly well throughout 1993. This is good news for gamesplayers, because continued sales of hardware leads to increased games development. But with so many games now available for the Mega Drive, a lot of publishers are beginning to talk of a second generation – a new wave of bigger, better Mega Drive games building on previous successes yet diversifying into previously uncharted gameplay territory – "Less titles, higher quality" seems to be the motto.

ELECTRONIC ARTS
Simon Jeffrey

"A number of industry pundits are forecasting doom and gloom – a repeat of the console market collapse of the early Eighties – but we don't see it that way. Sure, things will stabilise, but a crash is unlikely. Poor software will probably stop selling, so a major change is in the wind, but top notch stuff will continue to do the business. However, next Christmas may well mark the end of the boom, as you will see a number of other players, such as the big Japanese consumer electronics brand names* entering the market, and a process of stabilisation, even standardisation will begin."

116 • MPH •
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Some games are great on every machine, and *Lotus* is a perfect example

(*Not that EA could be talking about their own CD console produced in association with Japanese giant electronics firm Matsushita...)

"As for the quality of stuff released, that's easy – there are too many platform games! In the US, the Genesis is increasingly being seen as a sports game machine, and the SNES seen as a machine for playing coin-ops etc. With so much software now being produced, different genres are approaching saturation point. The time will come when people will simply stop buying games of certain genres as they have enough already, and they want something new.

"CD will hopefully afford games' designers the memory capabilities which they need to breathe fresh life into Mega Drive gaming. I play a lot of PC games at the moment; they are often truly staggering in terms of depth and gameplay. This is what the Mega Drive needs far more than a host of arcade conversions.

"Something that we have learnt is that a game which is great on one platform, may not necessarily translate well to another. Games such as *Lotus* are great wherever you play them, but others, well, don't fare so well. Nuff said!"

VIRGIN GAMES
Sean Brennan

"Software in general on the Mega Drive broadly reflects any major commercial format: 20% to 30% of it is of high quality, the rest is average. Most of it could be described as 'formula stuff', but then again, do the consumers want anything intrinsically different from traditional arcade games?

"Do the public get what they want or want what they get? Sports, platform and beat-'em-up games sell well because they are what the kids want. They just need better quality graphics/animation, harder levels etc. To improve the quality of software, Sega could be more demanding and refuse to publish certain titles, so long as they are not ours!"

BALLISTIC
Alan Welsman

"Mega Drive software's a mixed bag, basically. While there are a growing number of game styles for different audiences, there is still a real mixture of "quality". Accolade have always prided themselves on high-quality products for PC and Amiga and have attempted to bring this ethos to the Mega Drive. *Winter Challenge, Test Drive II* and *Super Off Road* have proved this can be done, and if perhaps the company has faltered on other titles, you can rest assured that MEGA, Sega Power and other magazines have let us know and we have most definitely taken notice. Wait for Bubsy!"

Super Off Road: **Dirt, speed and a chance to bump your opponents into the fence. Nice one chaps!**

So it looks like the software publishers are seeking to follow Nick Alexander's line of argument, which is good news. Quite how this "second generation" of Mega Drive games shapes up remains to be seen, but in whichever direction things move, it looks like we can all look forward to a general higher quality – and that can't be a bad thing.

> **"We've learnt that by spending time perfecting a game, as in the case of *Sonic 2*, success will come. The lesson is to maintain quality, don't put out too many similar titles and then work them hard."**
>
> **Nick Alexander, boss of Sega Europe**

BATMAN RETURNS
(Sega)

Batman Returns is essentially the same as the Mega Drive game of the same name, which got a 40% rating in the December issue of MEGA. This version promises to include game animation running twice as fast as the cartridge version (a sceptical editor writes: not quite sure how they're going to do that, but we'll have to wait and see) with a full driving level, a Batski level, and even some extra secret bonus levels. Should be better than the Mega Drive version? Holy-hope so.

Turn Over

MEGA CD

COOL WORLD (Sega)

The game that MEGA's male contingent can't wait to get their hands on. Based on the animated/live acting film (kinda Roger Rabbit the second, err – except with no rabbits), *Cool World* has plenty of scope to use the power of CD-ROM to store lots of animated sequences taken from the movie – including (of course) the delectable moves of a certain Ms Basinger. The plot goes something along the lines of an animator falling in love with the characters he creates. The really good news is that it stars Kim Basinger...

DOLPHIN (Sega)

This is a secret project that's been worked on for some time. You play a dolphin that has to avoid various aquatic, man-made or predatory obstacles and enemies – a kind of eco-friendly *Sonic The Hedgehog*. The animation is reputed to be stunning, with smooth rotation and realistic movement. This could be the one that really shows what the Mega CD is capable of.

DUNGEON MASTER: SKULL KEEP (JVC)

Grab that woven cloak and spiritual dagger, and get to grips with a genuine D&D masterpiece.

G-LOC (Sega)

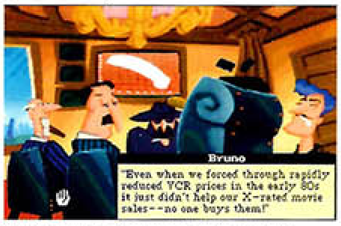
The only Mega CD game that looks set to rival *Afterburner III* as the Mega CD's definitive seat-of-your-pants sidewinder-'em-up. Like *Rad Mobile, G-LOC* (Gravity induced Loss Of Consciousness) looks set to be an arcade-perfect coin-op conversion minus only the optional hydraulic game-seat.

KING'S QUEST V (Sierra)

Yet another (but we're not complaining) highly popular role-playing game on the home computer which is soon to be seen on the Mega CD. It has a tried and trusted fantasy plot, in which you have to battle your way through the mystical land to give Mordack the evil wizard a good ticking off.

King's Quest V should have loads of pictures and loads of depth.

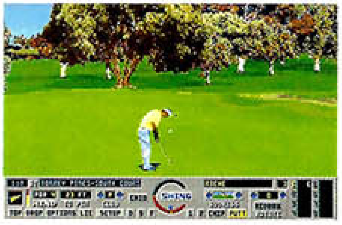
LEISURE SUIT LARRY (Sierra)


Bruno
"Even when we forced through rapidly reduced VCR prices in the early 80s it just didn't help our X-rated movie sales--no one buys them!"

Meet Larry, a character which any PC owner will be able to tell you all about. The woman-hunting, liquor-drinking, lounge-lizarding hero is set to make his Mega CD debut appearance courtesy of Sierra. This saucy animated adventure game was among the first in which animated characters played in an adventure game environment. Basically, you have to help Larry in his mission to pick up chicks. We're sure that both MEGA-reading men and women will be able to bring some form of expertise to his adventures.

The game promises quality music and actors' voices in place of the computer version's on-screen text, indicating that a great game looks set to become even better.

LINKS (Virgin Games)



Virgin have started work on a Mega CD version of the spectacular *Links* golf game, that wowed PC gamers everywhere. The original game had eight famous courses, which were photographed and digitised especially for the game giving it an unparalleled level of visual realism. It also had nine different viewing options, massive panoramic views of the courses, good club selections and a variety of tournament options featuring distinctly different golfers. Classic stuff.

OUT OF THIS WORLD (Virgin Games)

An adaptation of the atmospheric, absorbing (but just too short) Amiga/PC game *Another World*. It's full of 3D graphics and animation, and our hero must work his way through 14 levels of brain-achingly tough action to reach his goal. If Virgin Games take time out to add to the game as they intend doing with *Terminator*, then we're all in for a treat.

PIT-FIGHTER 2 (Tengen)

This could well succeed in being what the Mega Drive version came so close to achieving – a game to match the atmosphere and excitement of the coin-op. They now have the technology, it just remains to be seen if they have the ambition and the ability to carry it off.

POLICE QUEST 3 (Sierra)

Another animated adventure, placing the player in the size tens of a cop. There are plenty of missions that come through on your police radio. It's your job to protect, serve and beat up citizens while under police custody.

RAD MOBILE (Sega)

This is an arcade conversion driving game that truly kicks. Resplendent with *Sonic* mirror-dangler and 4WD, prepare to experience the race of your life. Custom sprite-scaling is the visual treat here, as scenery rushes past your wing-mirrors at ridiculous speeds.

RBI BASEBALL IV (Tengen)

This could well turn out to be Sega's first truly excellent baseball game, although quite how it will manage to come up with anything new remains a mystery, but on MEGA hope springs eternal...

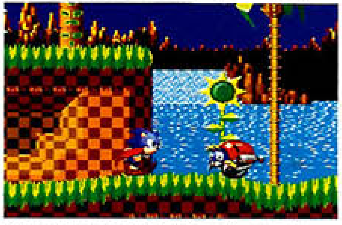
THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND (JVC)

The number one hit on all 16-bit home computers looks set to do the same on the Mega CD. *Monkey Island* is a text and graphics adventure game that took the world by storm with its amazing playability, devilish humour and real gaming challenge. More than just a straight copy, the CD game will have real actors and comedians playing the various parts as well as much animation as is possible. The emphasis is very much on humour, as Guybrush Threepwood The Pirate battles foes and uncovers dastardly plots – he even gets to squeeze in a few sword fights as well. This is one game that MEGA tips for the top.

SIM EARTH (Sega)

One of the many follow-ups to *Sim City* that never quite managed to equal the original's compulsive addictiveness, but it is still a decent enough game. You take control of the whole world in a bid to make a better job than the powers that be seem to be doing at the moment.

SUPER SONIC (Sega)



Sega are hoping that their spiky speed-merchant will do exactly the same for the Mega CD as the original did for the Mega Drive. At this point in time, it's not known whether the game will feature any of the special graphical effects that CD capability offers (and the game plot will essentially remain the same), but high-quality music is definitely on the cards. Expect great things.

TERMINATOR (Virgin Games)

Not content with releasing just Mega Drive, Master System and Game Gear versions, Virgin Games also intend bringing *Terminator* to the Mega CD. Instead, however, of just porting it over, they've decided to add some more levels, add some fantastic sound and even include some digitised shots from the film.

TERMINATOR 2 (Flying Edge)

In full arcade, coin-op effect, *Terminator 2* from Flying Edge is guaranteed to sell by the shop-load. Watch out for a special version for use with the Menacer as well. The standard Mega Drive version is reviewed in this issue of MEGA on page 55.

THE THIRD WORLD WAR (Bignet)

Military strategy is the name of the game as you attempt to demolish half the world. That'll be the half of the world that doesn't belong to you as opposed to (a bit of green politics here) your side, which you're slowly destroying anyway.

WILLY BEAMISH (Sierra)

Another tried and trusted game making the PC to Mega CD transition. *Willy Beamish* is a big, bright and colourful graphics adventure in which you've been given the task of baby-sitting for your little sister, but you'd rather do more exciting things instead...

The Mega CD's immense storage space will be used to hold lots of highly-detailed, full-screen graphics. This game could really be a classic.

WING COMMANDER (Sega)

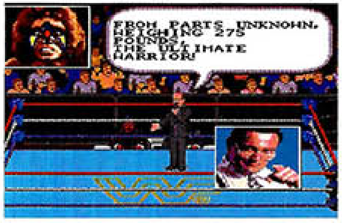
A 3D blast-'em-up-cum-flight-sim in which you view the action from inside the cockpit of your fighter. The game should feature some seriously-sophisticated animation (including an animated hand grasping a joystick and moving in sync with the player as the action is controlled from the joypad controller). The detailed graphics of the original PC/Amiga graphics should be further enhanced by the use of the Mega CD's custom scaling chip. A game for the more intellectually-demanding flight freak, unlike *Afterburner III*, which is a game for anyone with red blood running through their veins.

WOLFCHILD (JVC)

A platform game which shows some real graphics, muscle and some amazing samples in-game as well. This is a walk-along-and-beat-'em-up type of game. You have to progress through many platform levels, beating up nasties and trying to rescue your kidnapped father.

The plot: Dad made a machine which turns people into wolves. An evil dictator wants the machine. You, using your incredible wolf-like powers, must put paid to his evil plans. Format? It's on Mega CD, and it's comin' at ya soon.

WWF WRESTLE MANIA (Flying Edge)


FROM PARTS UNKNOHN. WEIGHING 275 POUNDS. THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR!

Grapple fans can look forward to a specially enhanced version of *WWF Wrestle Mania* on the Mega CD. Quite how it will differ from the cartridge version (reviewed on page 44) isn't clear, but assorted still pictures of wrestlers is pretty much guaranteed, wouldn't you think?

FOUR GAMES IN ONE CD (Sega)

Game compilations will be appearing for the Mega CD soon. In the States, a CD is available featuring *Streets Of Rage, Columns, Golden Axe* and *Revenge of Shinobi*. At last, in a market where you have to fork out forty quid a game, the age of budget console software may finally be upon us.

Psygnosis originally designed *Lemmings*, made a bloody great wodge of cash then (instead of bogging off to the Bahamas) blew it all on high-tech development kit. So, is there life after *Lemmings?* Well, apparently yes, because Psygnosis have now exclusively revealed to MEGA their plans for the Mega CD...

LEMMINGS was cool, but WHAT NEXT?

In a console-world dominated by giant Japanese and American corporations, it's refreshing to hear from a British-based game developer that is actually leading the rest of the world. Psygnosis read MEGA's *Lemmings* review, decided we knew what we were talking about, so phoned us up to suggested, "Come and take a look at what we're doing on the Mega CD – we think you'll like it".

However, battle-hardened from six months of the same old mediocre-Mega-Drive-title-with-souped-up-soundtrack games, regurgitated onto Compact Disc, we saved cracking open the Angel Delight until we'd actually been to have a look. Luckily, we were in for a surprise...

EXPLOITING NEW TECHNOLOGY

The stuff we've seen so far on the Mega CD has been dire. No, it's been worse than that; it's been utter tripe. The only game we've seen with a hint of novelty has been *Thunderstorm FX*, but then it wasn't so much a game as a graphics' demo.

So, we decided to have a chat with Ian Grieve of Psygnosis to try and find out just what the Mega CD is really capable of...

So (ahem) what's the Mega CD really capable of?

"If nothing else, the extra storage capacity and 150K per second download (that means the stuff stored on disk can be accessed and used very quickly without any long, annoying pauses – Hastily Hired Technical Editor) opens up new possibilities for the graphical side of things. You don't have to just add levels and make games bigger or add a CD soundtrack."

Which is really all that Mega CD games have done so far (without the extra levels), isn't it?

"Yes, but we're very impressed with the machine – it has a great future with the right software."

And you think you have the capability to produce that software, given your huge investment in graphics technology?

"We realised that CD Rom is definitely the way forward, that's why we've invested so heavily in it. When people see the quality of software you can achieve with the Mega CD, they won't be able to churn out the hardware fast enough. We've spent two and a half years developing CD stuff, seven months of which have been specifically on the Mega CD. Basically, we've been working on things for the future. The system we use to produce our computer animations is a £25,000 Silicon Graphics work station, which can create cinema quality visuals (like the FX used in *Terminator 2*). We presented some of our stuff to people in Hollywood and they said, in not so many words, 'why aren't you guys doing special effects for us?'

"But for home console and computer use, the 16,000,000 colour animation is downloaded onto a Macintosh in 256 colours. The image suffers slightly, but the effects are still stunning. From here, the animation is transferred to the various formats (like the Japanese FM Towns machine), depending on what we're developing for. Of course, on the Mega Drive the images have to again be downgraded to only 64 colours – the image suffers, but still, even though the colours are limited and the image becomes pixellated, the movement is still incredibly smooth and the effects are unlike anything seen on the Mega Drive so far."

But will all this work bring you any reward? How popular do you think the Mega CD will be, when it looks like the state of the international currency market (steady on – Neil) will mean the Mega CD costs well over £200?

"The thing with the Mega CD is that it's a whole new system, but at the same time it's an add-on. So people can have a Mega Drive for Christmas, then the Mega CD for their birthday perhaps. People may be wary of a stand-alone system at a high price, but if you already own a Mega Drive, it's a natural progression – you've got the Mega Drive, the obvious next step is to get the Mega CD. When it's launched, it'll sit in the shops with stunning demos running on it, and the machine will practically sell itself."

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

It's good to hear a respected programming team such as Psygnosis highly enthusiastic about the Mega CD – the steady trickle of hastily prepared titles so far released for Sega's "next generation of hardware" have unjustly, although understandably, disappointed many gamers. But now it looks like things are starting to change, and what follows are two previews (from Psygnosis) to prove it...

Turn over

WILL THE MEGA CD MAKE IT BIG?

If you've been following the Mega CD news, then you may think the new machine's not actually much cop. Not so. It now seems that it was only a lack of decent software that was letting the new beast down. So will things change now that Sega have a wealth of Euro-programmers on the case? We asked five of the video game industry's biggest players for their opinion. Here are some of the highlights...

US GOLD

Danielle Woodyatt

"We will definitely be working with the Mega CD. The only product we can talk about is a Mega CD version of *Flashback*, but we are working on other stuff too"

PSYGNOSIS

Breaking NEW DRACULA

Psygnosis's first two Mega CD games are looking incredible, but have they got the gameplay to back up the good looks? Well, we'll just have to wait and see. One thing, however, is for sure: the run, jump and punch formula of *Shadow Of The Beast* now seems to be just a distant memory

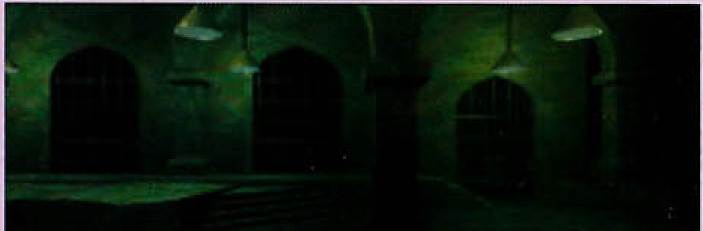
We must all have seen at least twelve movie versions of Dracula, and let's be honest, they're all pretty cack. They do have a strange sort of charm, but if you'd read the classic novel by Bram Stoker, you'd know how fantastically untrue to the plot they are... until now that is.

Director Francis Ford Coppola (he did the Godfather movies) has done a new version of this bloody tale, which pretty much sticks directly to the plot of the book. By all accounts, the film is absolutely brilliant. And guess who's got the licence to do the game. That's right, Psygnosis. (Cue: rant about how film tie-ins are notoriously rushed, under-budgeted and, well, crap? No, Psygnosis are new on the Sega scene, so let's give them the benefit of the doubt.)

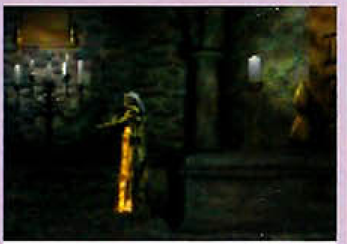
They've been working closely with the film makers out in America since March in order to make the game capture the atmosphere and spirit of the film as closely as possible. Quite apart from the spooky computer animations, the game will also include actual footage from the film to increase the already pretty gloomy atmosphere.

All the characters from the film are in the game too and they're all pretty much accurate, right down to the costumes they wear. Gameplay-wise we can't really comment yet, but if you imagine a sort of *Prince of Persia* meets *Another World* with some other, different, sections thrown in (for example there's a horse-riding sequence), then you should start to get the picture. And while *Prince of Persia* and *Another World* were fairly slow moving and action free, Dracula is a lot more frantic, with attacks from bats, spiders, snakes and rats never letting up.

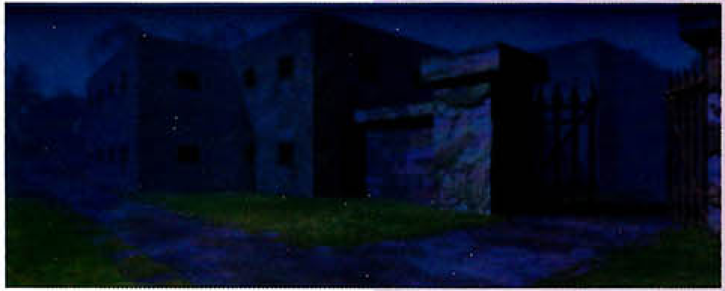
So then, with any luck, this should be (gameplay permitting) just the kick up the butt that the MEGA CD needs in order to ensure its success in 1993.



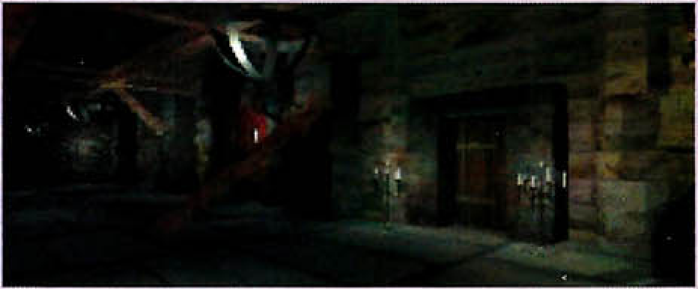
Believe it or not, give or take a few colours, this is the sort of thing that will appear in the actual game. And it all scrolls in perspective too



Erm, not entirely sure where this fits in. Perhaps it's Drac himself waking from a particularly long kip?



Another of the amazing animated sequences in the game. This is the outside of the castle in which most of the action takes place. Spooky, ain't it?



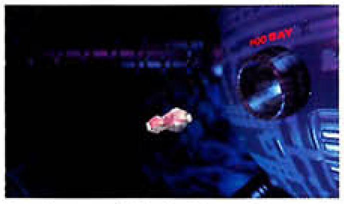
When you reach the end of a hall, the game switches undetectably into an impressive sequence in which the view swings round by 90 degrees

VIRGIN GAMES

Sean Brennan

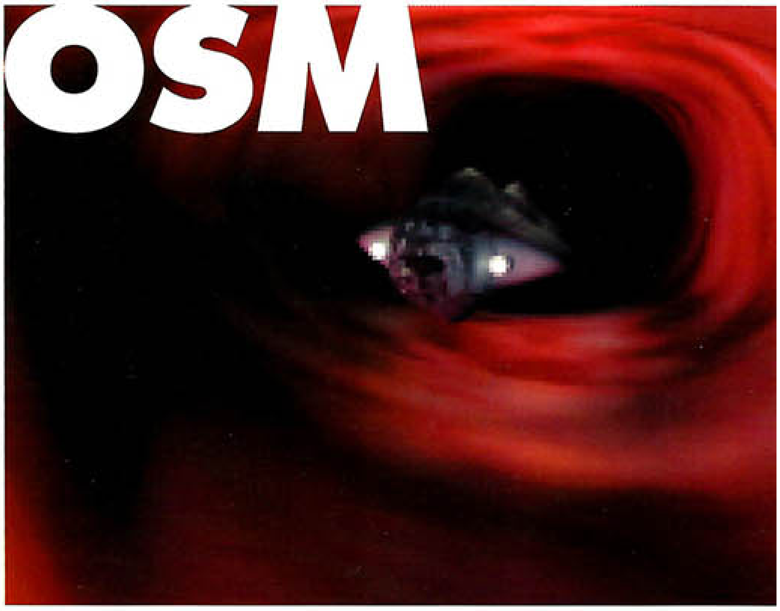
"The Mega CD's success depends upon the strength and depth of its software; it has to be of better quality than current Mega Drive software. However, the Mega CD will soon be superseded by the next generation of CD machines from Sega and Nintendo"

PSYGNOSIS


Here's your ship docking at the pod

ground

MICROCOSM


This is one of the animated bits, but the game itself features backdrops just like this, with sprites laid over the top. The effect is quite stunning

Had this game come out a few years back, it could well have been a film licence. You may remember that there was a rather good film starring Dennis Quaid called Inner Space. The plot basically revolved around the star getting into a submarine, shrinking down to the size of a blood cell and then being injected into the bloodstream of somebody very ill – an important person in a last attempt to clear up a spot of cancer (or something like that anyway).

> **The graphics are quite unbelievable**

Microcosm has much the same plot as this film, except the reason for entering the body this time is to seek out and destroy some other submarines belonging to a rival corporation called Shrinky-Dink-O-Matic Ltd (err, possibly).

Once again Psygnosis have used their stunning graphics' techniques to produce some unbelievable visuals. The sequence in which you're flying through veins and arteries is unbelievable, and on top of this animation sits the sprite of your sub and any oncoming enemies you may encounter. Also, at various points throughout the body, there are pod stations, where you can dock and perhaps pick up a different vehicle in which to continue the adventure.

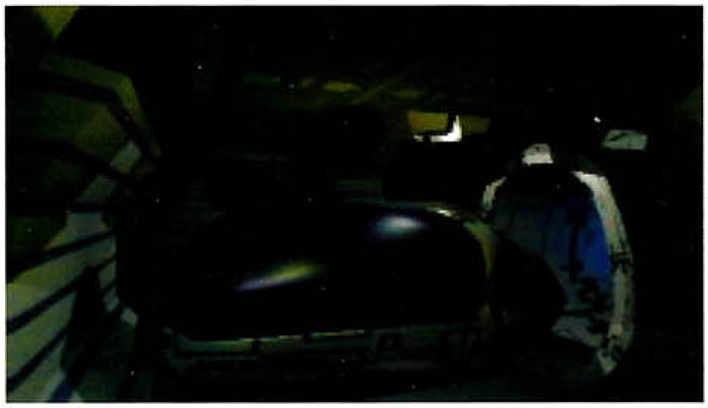
When you dock at a station, the game goes into auto mode and some even more detailed animation kicks in. There's no interaction in this bit and it's really just a cosmetic touch, but throughout the game, the constant changes between the playable bits and the "movie" scenes are so smooth that it all feels like one sequence with small pauses for you to catch your breath.

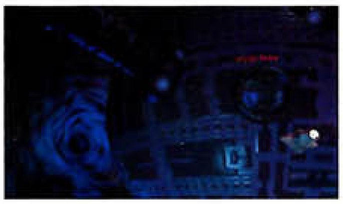
It's not like *Terminator,* in which you finish a level then have to sit through a tedious animated sequence before moving on (invariably you chose to flip through them after the first game). You may not be able to interact with the movie bits, but they're still very much part of the game.

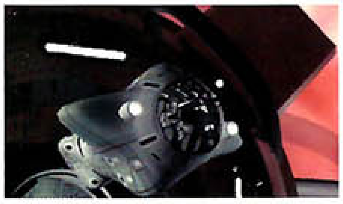
Sadly, that's about as much as we know at the moment. We haven't as yet sampled the gameplay, but Psygnosis promise a sort of 3D shoot-'em-up with knobs on. So if you want to find out more about how the thing actually plays, stay tuned to MEGA because we'll be bringing you the full review very, very soon.

So there we have it, two products which promise to be like nothing we've ever seen on the Mega Drive before. We were certainly impressed with the visual side of things, so we've all got our fingers crossed that the gameplay will come up trumps too. Right, time to take a peek at how Psygnosis actually achieved all this.

Turn over


Although the 64 colour Mega Drive version won't be as colourful as this, it'll be just as smooth. These aren't static screens – all moves perfectly


When you dock with the pod stations, a smart filmy sequence...


... takes you from the outside, to the safety of the pod. Gorgeous

SEGA
Nick Alexander

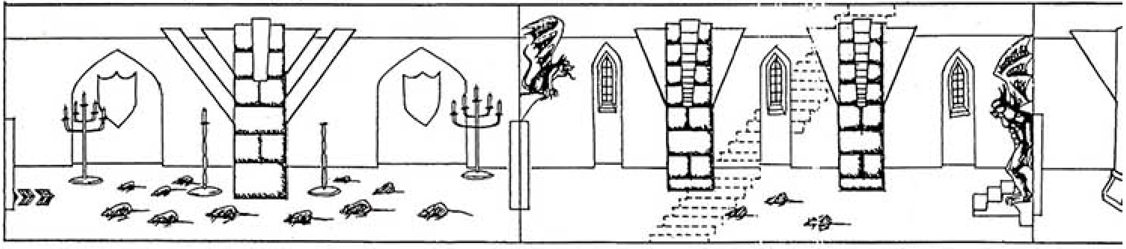
"We're still unsure of the pricing point of the Mega CD at the moment due to exchange rates and so on. We're looking at around the £250 price mark. We're hoping to have an installed user base of 300,000 by the end of 1993 and depending on pricing later in the year, it could even be more"

Making MOV the MEGA

There are six (not so easy) steps to making movies on the Mega CD. And here they are

When it was first announced that Mega CD games would cost as much as carts (despite the fact that CDs cost less than £1 to manufacture and on average carts cost £10) the instant reaction was to claim "rip off!". But if the Mega CD's capabilities are to be utilised to the full, then it will need a lot more man hours to develop a game – and that costs money. Here are the steps involved in creating interactive movie masterpieces.

Some poor sod has to design every inch of every level on paper



① First off, the game is designed on paper: the theme, the concept, outlines of what the gameplay is going to do, all that sort of stuff. You then have a clear game plan to work from.

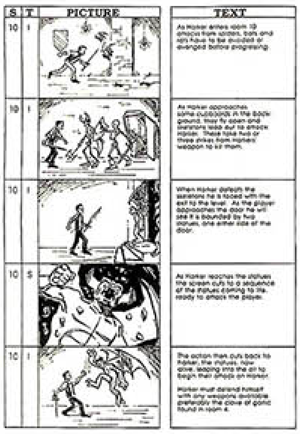
② Next, one of the artists draws up a storyboard in exactly the same way as movie makers do. Each frame depicts an aspect of the gameplay such as when, where and how the enemies will appear.

THE FUTURE'S SO BRIGHT...

Psygnosis's stuff really does look fantastic, and MEGA can confirm that they're not the only developers busy pushing back the borders of what was thought to be possible on the Mega CD. Probe (the programmers responsible for *Terminator, Alien 3* and *Terminator 2*) have a similar development kit to that of Psygnosis, and Electronic Arts have also confirmed that they're busy "doing things" with the Mega CD. So don't hold your breath just yet, but rest assured that some truly outstanding games will be winging their way to you by the middle of next year...

③ Next the amazing backgrounds are all worked out, modelled on the workstation (£25,000 worth) and animated. For the sprites, the *Dracula* team dressed up in costumes, got a video camera and filmed themselves falling over, jumping, punching and strangling people.

④ These video sequences are fed into an Amiga and displayed in a sophisticated art package (developed by Electronic Arts, of all people) called Deluxe Paint – they are now computer images, not video recordings. Any glitches or imperfections from the transformation process are sorted out and the sprites are "touched up" to create a unified, pre-defined style. This laborious process is repeated squillions of times until all the animated footage needed for the game is complete and "in the can" (I've always wanted to say that).



⑤ Now the 16,000,000 images of colour animation are fed into the Macintosh before being compressed and transferred to the various formats such as CD-TV, FM Towns and, of course, Mega Drive.

⑥ Once all this graphical stuff has been sorted, the programmers can get on with the task of sorting out the gameplay and tweaking it to perfection (we hope). Then all you need to do is bang out a version actually on CD to see if the final product will work. This is made easier using a CD emulator. Basically, this machine takes the code from the Mac and outputs it to a Mega Drive in exactly the same way as a CD would, so that the team can see how well the CD performs without actually having to press a real one. Clever stuff!

It all sounds rather complex, but it is in fact remarkably simple. The really incredible thing is what these people are doing with the equipment. It's the talent of the development teams which hits you most. While we were at Psygnosis, one of the artists had just started making a computer generated model of a horse's carriage. The canvas roof was done and

The frame by frame storyboard on the left outlines the gameplay

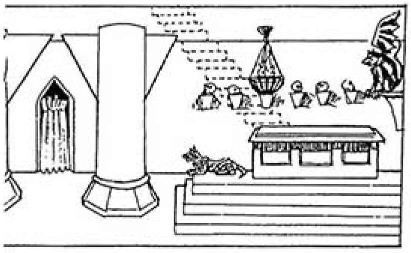
On the right is a fully rendered view of the inside of the castle

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Simon Jeffrey

> **"EA will be producing for the Mega CD, as we believe that the CD is the optimum storage medium provided by current technology levels. We predict that by the mid-90s, a CD standard will be established in the same way as VHS in the video market"**

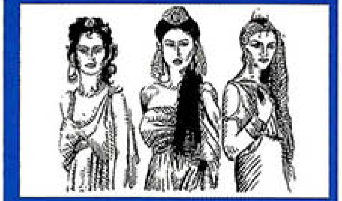
IES on CD



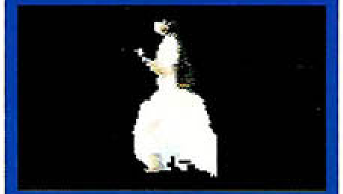
one wall, and that was it. After trogging around the building for an hour or two we went back to the guy, and there it was... a complete carriage with walls, wheels, the lot. In a matter of seconds it was rendered and coloured and filled and, and (well God knows what else), but during the course of our visit a computer model of a carriage, that looked barely distinguishable from the real thing, had appeared before our eyes. Take a look at the screenshots, and you'll get some idea of the sort of phenomenal stuff they're churning out. Ⓜ

DO THE SPRITE THING

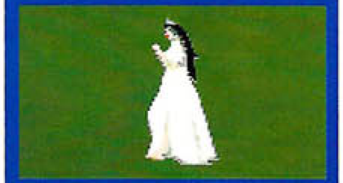
It's not easy making your sprites move as if they're real. You need equipment, time, and a few people who don't mind making fools of themselves



Step one – sketch out a rough and a description of what's needed



Step two – video costumed folk, then feed the images into an Amiga, thus



Step three – Touch up the image, repeat dozens of times, and voila!

BALLISTIC

Alan Welsman

"Accolade endorses the use of CD technology in the games arena"

SO WHO ARE PSYGNOSIS?

Psygnosis were founded in 1984, to produce games purely for the 16-bit machines (mainly the Amiga and Atari ST) which had, at the time, not yet become widely popular. This was reflected in a poor early performance, and the company only produced a couple of titles each year for some time. Their decision to stick with the 16-bitters proved to be the right one, however, although the full potential was realised only after two guys, named Ian Hetherington and Jonathon Ellis (who'd been dissatisfied with the way the company was being handled), bought up the whole thing in 1988. The company then grew, very fast.

As the demand for 16-bit games took off, Hetherington and company adopted a policy of giving projects to outside developers, in a bid to make the games more experimental, and to move away from the arcade platformers that had been kicking around for so long.

As time passed, Psygnosis's trademark became their stunning visuals. Their games looked like nothing else around at the time. The graphical excellence of their products was undeniable, but there was a little criticism of the depth of gameplay underneath the slick presentation (it would seem that things just never change).

However, in recent years, Psygnosis have been able to concentrate more fully on gameplay. The art team is talented beyond belief, and it works so efficiently (things will get better still with the power of the CD arriving) that visuals now use less memory space, are less demanding of the computer's attention, and hence can be integrated with a more solid, complex game.

One excellent example of such developments is *Lemmings*. Sunsoft actually published the Mega Drive version, but it remains Psygnosis's baby through and through – we love it, rating it number six in our all time Top 100. The great news is that the profits made from *Lemmings* are now being invested in CD-development technology. Sounds too good to be true, doesn't it?

Ian Heatherington

ROLL THOSE CREDITS

If Psygnosis are describing their games as interactive movies (yes OK, we've heard it before, but this is closer than previous efforts), then it may be in no small part due to the size of their development teams.

PROJECT MANAGER on Dracula: Ian Grieve

TEAM LEADER (Bloke what has to organise it all and gets all the crap if it goes wrong):
Paul Frewin

BLUE SCREEN/BACKGROUNDS/ MOVIES/SPRITES (Them what designs and animates stuff while dressing up in daft costumes to video themselves):
Neil Thompson
Lee Carus-Westcott
Jim Bowers

PROGRAMMERS (Folks who don't really have a social life, but are pretty handy with a computer):
Gavin Dodd
David Beresford
Chris Wiley

SPRITE WORK (Yet more people involved with design):
Mike Waterworth
Nicki Carus-Westcott
Jeff Bramfitt

SPRITE LIST (He who had to compile all the necessary documentation to turn the Dracula cast into little digital masterpieces):
Gary Burley

MAPS (well someone had to do it):
Chris Moore

STORYBOARD (a piece of paper, a pen, and bucket-loads of imagination):
Neal Sutton

MAC WORK (Squeezing quarts into pint pots):
Dominic Mallinson, Simon Moore and Stuart

This is the start of our biggest previews section ever. Why us, and it's looking like '93 is going to be the most exciti Dyer has a celebratory tumbler of whiskey, and slurs his

STREETFIGH CHAMPIONSHIP

Sega • March

The story so far: Sega have spread rumours that *Streetfighter 2: Championship Edition* will be appearing on the Mega Drive on 1 March, 1993...

But now we hear other rumours (this time not directly from Sega HQ) that the game may first appear on Mega CD, bundled with the new machine to help push early sales. We do know this much:

● Capcom, the coin-op's designers, are also programming the Mega Drive/Mega CD? version.

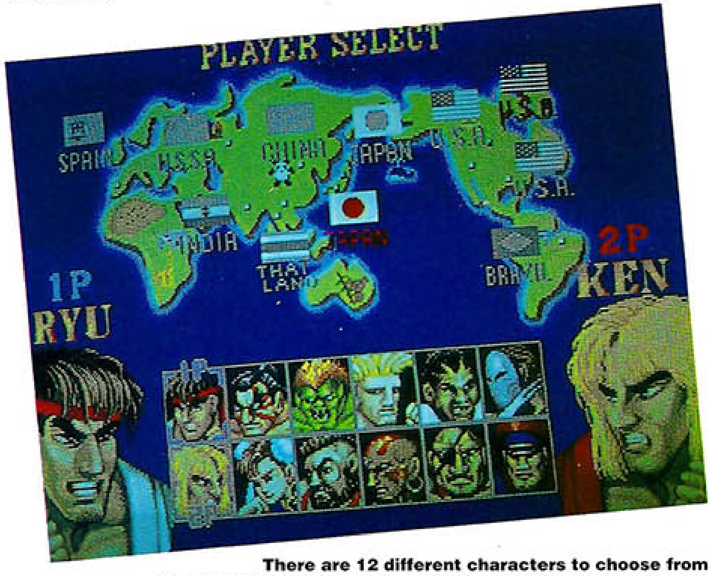
● It's the Champiosnhip Edition version of the game we're talking about, not the standard original.

● The game will be available in the UK on 1 March, 1993.

● Sega are releasing a special six-button joypad for use with *Streetfighter 2*.

So you're all looking forward to it and we can't wait to get our hands on it. But just how good will *Streetfighter 2* be? How important a game is it? And what effect will it have on Nintendo?

Sega are still refusing to announce the game officially, so when you ask any of their staff about it, all you're given is a smug grin accompanied by a "sorry, no comment". So MEGA decided to ask the opinions of three other people involved in this crazy, crazy world of video games: Gary Lidden, expert Mega Drive programmer from Probe (the team responsible for *Terminator, Alien 3* and *Terminator 2*); Simon Jeffrey, marketing manager of top software house *Electronic Arts*; and (snigger) Mike Hayes, marketing manager of Bandai, Nintendo's representatives in the UK...



There are 12 different characters to choose from (including the four bosses, unavailable in the original game). You can also match characters against themselves. (Picture from coin-op)

SO WILL THE MEGA DRIVE VERSION OF *STREETFIGHTER 2* ACTUALLY BE ANY GOOD?

Is the Mega Drive capable of reproducing all the moves and animation of the coin-op? Capcom managed a faithful coin-op conversion before with *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*, but *Streetfighter 2* is in a different league all together.

Gary Lidden (Probe):

"I don't see any reason why the Mega Drive version of *Streetfighter 2* shouldn't be excellent. OK, so compared to the SNES, the Mega Drive suffers from some palette restriction, but in terms of CPU welly, the Mega Drive's quicker then the SNES. Having said that, I don't think that *Streetfighter 2* is the ultimate fighting game – I think that there are lots of better beat-'em-ups around.

"Back to the matter in hand though. There's no reason why all the original moves can't be included in the Mega Drive version, especially if the new six-button pad is introduced. Converting graphics from arcade games is not a problem as long as your development kit is sound (and you've got the time to get them properly re-touched afterwards). Capcom know what they're doing and they've got the resources and the talent (plus of course the advantage of being the game's original programmers) to do an excellent job."

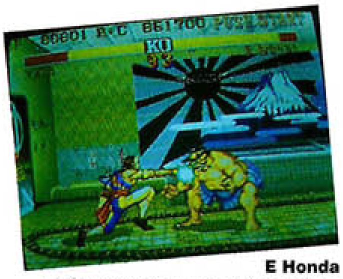
SO WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Whether a CD version of *Streetfighter 2* is used to shift the Mega CD has yet to be decided, but it does seem a bizarre coincidence that 1 March, 1993 has been pencilled in as the launch date for both the hottest game and the hottest piece of hardware that we're likely to see for some time.

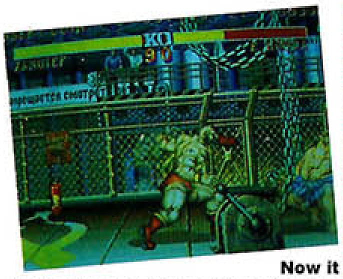
Still, as ever, we'll keep you informed of what's going on as and when we hear about it. Watch this space...

**is it so huge? Because 1993 is upon
ng year for the Mega Drive yet. Andy
way through the latest developments**

TER 2:
EDITION



E Honda waits patiently while Vega has a quick slash. (Picture from coin-op)



Now it looks like E Honda's gargling! Come on fat bloke. (Picture from coin-op)

JUST HOW BIG IS *STREETFIGHTER 2?*

So what's all the fuss about, surely *Streetfighter 2* is just another beat-'em-up?

Simon Jeffrey (EA):
"*Streetfighter 2* is the single BIGGEST game around at the moment, well close anyway (obviously not quite as big as *Mario* or *Sonic 2*), but it really is huge. If it wasn't for *Streetfighter 2*, the Mega Drive would be flattening the SNES this Christmas, but this one single game is just about the only thing that's kept Nintendo in there.

"The rumours of a Mega Drive release won't sell that many Mega Drives (if the game is that important to them, they'll buy it on SNES), but what these rumours are doing is comforting those Mega Drive owners who have been thinking of buying a SNES to play *Streetfighter 2* – it's a very cunning move for Sega to get these rumours spreading.

"I reckon that the game should be pretty much as good as the SNES version, and this will secure its success even if the hype has started to die down by the time the cart arrives. As to the rumours of Sega bundling a CD version of *Streetfighter 2* with the Mega CD when they launch it, all I can say is that, from a publisher's point of view, it makes a HUGE amount of sense. If Sega want the Mega CD to fly out of the door, then that would be the way to do it."

NINTENDO HAVE JUST SPENT £15 MILLION TELLING PEOPLE THAT THEY CAN PLAY *STREETFIGHTER 2* ONLY ON A SNES...

Surely Nintendo can't be too happy that *Streetfighter 2* is now coming out on Mega Drive? How do they feel about the rumours?

Mike Hayes (Bandai, Nintendo's representatives in the UK):
"We've heard rumours about Sega, just like everyone else, but we're not worried about rumours. How can we let rumours seriously effect a £15 million ad campaign? Anyway, the real fanatical fans of *Streetfighter 2*, the ones who would be affected by these rumours, will have bought a SNES version of *Streetfighter 2* on import months ago."

Well, whichever way you look at it – *Streetfighter 2* is big news, and looks set to be *the* game to look forward to in 1993.

DECEMBER

Championship Pro Am – Tradewest
These guys are just starting out on the Mega Drive, but this racer should be a laugh.

Jerry Glanvillies Pigskin Footbrawl – Razorsoft
Comedy American Football – just what the Mega Drive needs (ahem).

Chester Cheetah – Kaneko
This game is looking extremely weird. Guide Chester through the levels in search of his favourite brand of crisps.

Chakan: The Forever Man – Sega
An evil-looking platform game this, with you as Chakan. Strange indeed.

Super Battle Tank – Absolute
Tank simulations don't exactly make my blood boil, but this one has amazing graphics.

Outlander – Mindscape
It's post-holocaust time again, and you've got to save (what's left of) the world.

Hook (CD) – Sony
Hopefully this CD game will feature some stills and animation from the film. Don't know what the game is like though.

Sewer Shark (CD) – Sony
We've already seen some screenshots from the film, and they look stunning. The game, however, is just your average shoot-'em-up.

Battle Toads – Tradewest
A platform, shoot-'em-up and beat-'em-up all rolled into one. Don't despair though, because if the Nintendo version is anything to go by, it should be very good.

Flintstones – Taito
Fred's off on his travels again, with only his trusty club to fend off attackers.

Romance Of The Three Kingdoms 2 – Koei
The whole object of this (very) text-heavy adventure is to take complete control over China, although why you'd want to is beyond us.

Breach – Treco
Another strategy game. This time it's set in the future with ultra-modern warships.

Sorcerer's Kingdom – Treco
More strategy action from Treco, and this time it's all cute and fluffy. Just what we need.

Metal Fang – JVC
A decent overhead racing game, which gives you wicked power-ups. That what the Mega Drive really needs. Oh, and here it is.

Keeper Of the Gates – Razorsoft
Gory platform action and it is, in fact, the sequel to *Stormlord*. Exciting stuff, huh?

Monopoly – Parker Brothers
Right, I'll buy Mayfair and a hotel. Rivetting stuff this Monopoly eh?

Uncharted Waters – Koei
It's marine simulation time. Keep your family business above water (ha), and honour your family name.

Ninja Gaiden – Sega
This platform ninja beat-'em-up has been on loads of formats, and it now (finally) makes its way over to the Mega Drive.

SO WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO THE MEGA DRIVE IN 1993?

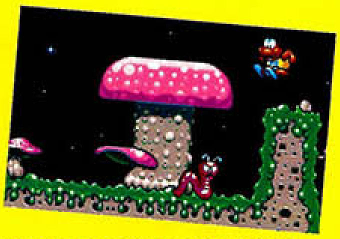
If you want to know what's going to happen to the future of video games, you can do one of two things: visit Aunty Meg and use her crystal ball, or talk to the people who actually make the games. Well, since MEGA doesn't believe in the occult, we asked five of the video game industry's biggest companies for their thoughts on how the Mega Drive and, more importantly for us, how Mega Drive games will fair in 1993. Will the Mega CD finally get off the ground? What type of new video game does the future hold (how many more shoot-'em-ups can the Mega Drive realistically take?) and what do the software houses intend to do about the current situation of software? We strapped several key industry figures to a chair, pointed a very strong 40 watt light bulb into their faces and asked them some serious software questions.

We really did talk to the people in the know: Danielle Woodyatt from US Gold, Sean Brennan from Virgin and Nick Alexander, the head of Sega Europe (amongst others). The best thing you can do is read what they've got to say, take a mental note, and then keep your copy of MEGA safe. If these folk haven't fulfilled their promises by the end of 1993, you can then dig out your old copy of MEGA and kick up a fuss. Still enough of this useless wibble, if you're interested in reading what the people who matter have to say, then turn the page and read on, if you're not, then don't. Simple...

JAMES POND 3 OPERATION STARFISH

Electronic Arts • March

That undercover Cod is back, and this time he's over the moon



James leaps over a caterpillar in a bid to avoid it. Er, it's a bit early to know what's going on yet

That dishy fishy, James Pond, is back! And so, unfortunately for the world, is his arch enemy, Dr Maybe. The dirty doctor has set up shop on the Moon and he has teams of rats mining cheese so that he can send it to Earth and flood the market. Dr Maybe can then take advantage of the global chaos and rule supreme.

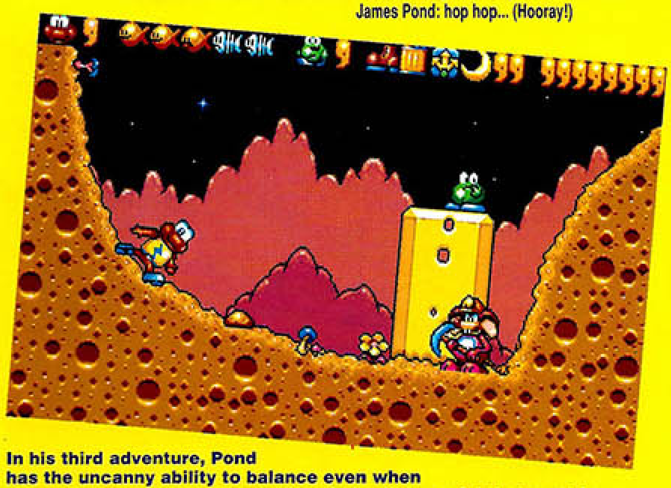
The Moon's made not just of cheese, but of every other dairy product, too. A whole world of over a hundred scrolling levels has evolved. Cheese Plains, Butter Mountains and an Ice Cream Zone are surrounded by a Milk Sea. You can see it all on a large map, which is used to plot Pond's progress. When a level is completed, Pond hops into his rocket ship and is moved to an adjacent location.

There are a great many routes through the map, and dozens of secret features and levels to discover along the way (*Operation Starfish's* author, Chris Sorrell, reckons there will be more than on any other Pond mission – or Mega Drive release for that matter – so far).

Pond's not alone on this mission – he has in tow trainee FI5H agent Finnius Frog, who you get to control by collecting a special token. Both characters can acquire kit along the way, with such handy items as a protective helmet, a fruit gun, springs for extra bounce, gum for extra traction and rocket boots.

Best of all though, this time around Pond's wearing Gravity Boots and he can now stick to everything – walls, ceilings and even large Boss characters!

The Pond character's going from strength to strength (*Robocod's* sales are over 100,000), and unlike a certain spiky speed freak, he's a British creation. *Operation Starfish* looks as though it will turn out to be Pond's most fulsome and demanding mission yet. Let's hear it for James Pond: hop hop... (Hooray!)



In his third adventure, Pond has the uncanny ability to balance even when perched at an awkward angle. How incredibly useful that must be...

Junkers High – Sims

Take *Chase HQ*, add four hundred years of car evolution, add some power-ups and then put them all together to get *Junkers High*. Early screenshots suggest that this could be a very good cart indeed.

Dark Wizard (CD)

Another CD RPG, with some astounding music and a very long intro sequence featuring real actors (their voices, not the actual people on the CD, if you know what I mean).

Nobunga and his Ninja Force (CD) – Compile

The Mega CD could do with a decent shoot-'em-up, and even though this looks good, we'll have to wait and see what it plays like.

Afterburner III (CD) – Sega

We really can't wait to see the graphics on this game. It promises to really use the Mega CD properly, and we all like mindless shooting action, don't we?

Power Athlete (Deadly Moves – USA) – Kaneko

A one-on-one beat-'em-up, and from what we've seen it's a direct *Street Fighter 2* rip-off. Could be good. But is it really up to *Street Fighter 2?*

G-LOC – Sega

This coin-op may be getting on in years, but the game might still be good for a laugh. Get in that jet fighter and get fighting.

The Secret of Monkey Island (CD) – Victor/JVC

A classic RPG on both the Amiga and the PC. The CD version should be really good, featuring real voices and extra animated screens.

American Gladiators – GameTek

More joypad-bashing and finger-swelling action tied into the cult American TV show. So all you Jet (or Panther) fans will be disappointed.

Chessmaster – Mindscape

It's chess, it's on the Mega Drive and... wake up at the back.

Ex-mutants – Sage's Creation

It's violent and it looks nice. What more do you want from a game?

Hook – Sony Imagesoft

The cart version of this game won't be as nice as the CD game, but it's not looking too bad.

King's Quest 5 (CD) – Sierra

Take control of King Graham as he fights the forces of evil. Very nice-looking and very atmospheric.

Tale Spin – Sega

More Sega platform related foolery starring that loveable Disney character, Baloo.

The Third World War (CD) – Bignet

Fancy trying to stop WWIII? Well check out this very intense strategy game then.The extra memory of the CD might well be used to make this game very big.

Trouble Shooter – Vic Tokai

The same game as Battle Mania, but slightly tweaked for the American market.We'll let you know if there are major differences.

Super Shinobi 2 – Sega

Similar looking to *Revenge of Shinobi*, and it plays the same too except it's bigger, better and a lot tougher.

Final Fight (CD) – Sega

One of the best beat-'em-ups ever gets the Mega CD treatment. All the old levels and more.

US GOLD

Danielle Woodyatt

RELEASES FOR 1993: *World Class Leaderboard, Super Kick Off, Strider 2, Flashback, Star Wars.*

> **"1993 will see continued increase in sales. Sega still have the lead over Nintendo and even if they don't hold it, they will still grow and keep selling more stuff. Next year we'll be producing more Mega Drive games than ever before"**

Road Riot 4WD – Tengen
Get in your four-wheel buggy, get on the road, and give them hell.

Gauntlet – Tengen
When the four-player adaptor is released (it's currently being worked on), this maze/arcade game should be a real cracker.

Boogy Woogy Bowling – Viscon
Tenpin bowling on your Mega Drive. What sport are they going to convert next? Curling?

Dungeon Master: Skull Keep (CD) – JVC
The classic interactive, atmospheric RPG, that should be a stunner on the CD.

Hit The Ice – Taito
Coin-op ice-hockey. Not a serious *NHLPA Hockey* rival, just a good laugh.

Police Quest 3 (CD) – Sierra
Truth, justice, the American way and mom's apple pie are all at risk in this adventure.

Space Quest 4 (CD) – Sierra
Search through the realms of time and space to rid the universe of evil beings. Something like that anyway.

Stellar 7 (CD) – Sierra
More space-romping role-playing interaction with astounding graphics and sound.

Mohammed Ali's Boxing – Virgin
With a 3D view of the ring as well as 360 degrees rotation around the ring, this could be the world's only good boxing game.

Cal Ripkin Baseball – Mindscape
Baseball is becoming really popular on the Mega Drive for some reason. Let's hope this has something new to offer.

Amazing Tennis – Absolute
A strange viewpoint – standing behind your character – but this could be quite good fun.

Chuck Rock (CD) – Sony
Chuck's back and he's on the CD. But I wonder how different the game is going to be?

Roger Clemens MVP Baseball – Flying Edge
More baseball action. This is getting really silly.

Humans – GameTek
Control your tribe of humans as they try to evolve, and help them out any way you can.

Jeopardy – GameTek
A strange game in which you're given the answer to the question first.

Turtles IV: Return of the Shredder – Konami
Choose one of the four turtles and then battle to defeat the evil Shredder.

Sunset Riders – Konami
Wild West bounty hunting. Booze, women and guns. Yeee-har!

Lightning Force – Sega
This is the American name for *Thunderforce IV*, so now you know.

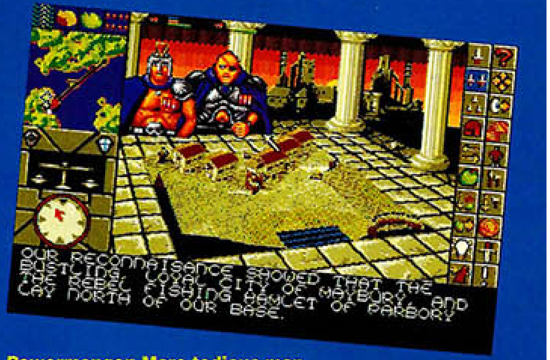
Toxic Crusader – Sega
Join the Toxic Crusader in his fight to rid the world of pollution.

Pro Quarterback – Tradewest
It's more American Football. Your guess is as good as ours as to what will be different.

POWERMONGER

Electronic Arts • December

Yip, time to play God again


OUR RECONNAISANCE SHOWED THAT THE BUSTLING LOYAL CITY OF MAYBORY AND THE REBEL FISHING HAMLET OF PARBORY LAY NORTH OF OUR BASE.

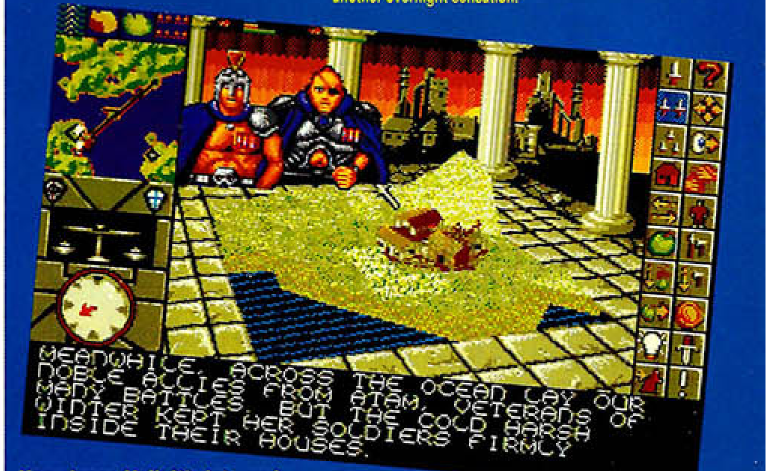
***Powermonger*: More tedious man management, or something genuinely and completely original? Who knows? Who flippin' well cares? (Do you want me to do these captions? – Neil)**

Oh lord, not another God simulator, we hear you cry. Well, yes it is, but this one's slightly different. Instead of trying to help a race or civilisation develop, this is more of a strategy war game with godly overtones. The idea is to manipulate the captains and soldiers in your army with a view to attacking and conquering nearly 200 territories.

OK, so it looks like plenty of other games, but it's the attention to detail that makes this one worth watching out for. For example, during battle, as troops die little ghostly figures float heavenwards. Not that impressive you may think, but you can actually click on these little apparitions and see who exactly it is you've lost. When playing there are also a number of options available to you. You can set the aggression level of your troops – obviously if you make them very aggressive, you can kill lots of people, but you'll find it very hard to strike up an alliance with other warring factions, and if a battle gets a bit too hairy, you can "go home".

You can also find and supply food and weapons, send your captain off around the play area with his men following him, send spies off on secret missions, transfer men, invent new weapons trade... in fact, there are all sorts of interesting methods you can employ to gain the ultimate victory.

It was nearly two years ago that *Powermonger* appeared on the home computer formats, so next month (or possibly the month after) we'll let you know if it has turned out to be a timeless classic or just another overnight sensation.


MEANWHILE, ACROSS THE OCEAN LAY OUR NOBLE ALLIES FROM ATAM, VETERANS OF MANY BATTLES, BUT THE COLD HARSH WINTER KEPT HER SOLDIERS FIRMLY INSIDE THEIR HOUSES.

Yes please Neil. It's late and I'm really rather tired. Thanks awfully old boy

Virgin GAMES

VIRGIN GAMES

Sean Brennan

RELEASES FOR 1993: *Another World, Spot: The Quest For Cool, Global Gladiators, Mega-Lo-Mania, Mohammed Ali Boxing, Jimmy White's Snooker, Superman.*

"If the software continues to be more challenging with greater depth, and if 'word of mouth' continues to portray the Mega Drive as a desirable item with real 'street cred', then Mega Drive owners will still buy the games"

MICRO MACHINES

Codemasters • March

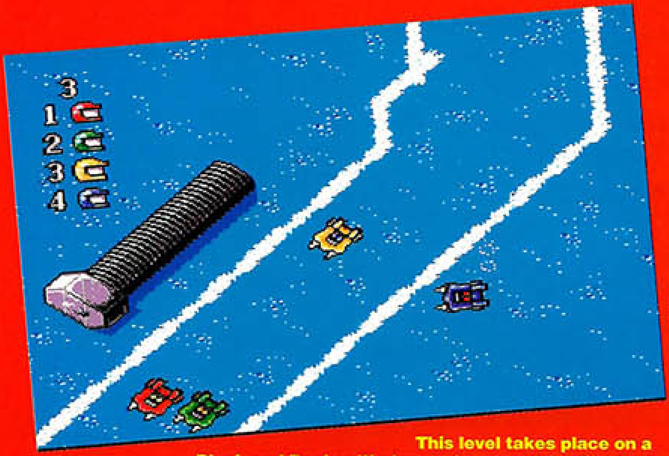
Simplistic, primitive... brilliant!

Once upon a time there was a console that wasn't particularly powerful. Also, this console was made by those dreadful chaps at Nintendo. Of course, us Sega types tried to ignore the foul little machine, but one day some programmers made an unassuming little game for it called *Micro Machines*. The game was a race game. Lots of special 3D visuals then, yes? Nope, overhead view only. Then it must be ultra realistic? Nope, you're driving model cars around breakfast tables, pool tables, gardens and so on. Oh, sounds a bit twee, doesn't it? But in actual fact, Nintendo and Sega players alike sat up, took notice, and pretty much all agreed that this cute little racer was one of the most enthralling games they had ever played in their lives.

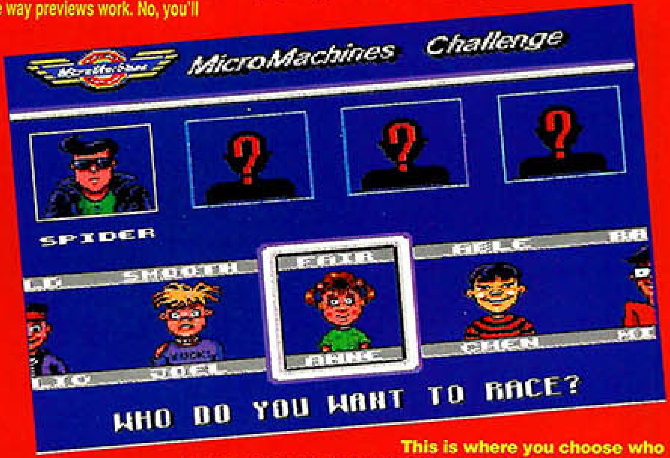
Small wonder then that Codemasters have converted this game to the Mega Drive. Now, we'd love to tell you whether it has retained all of its playability, but we can't – that's not the way previews work. No, you'll have wait until next month to read why it's absolutely brilliant. But, let's take a slightly closer look.

It's based on those tiny model cars you get from Galoob Toys Inc. You know the ones, you get those big display cases to keep them in as well. There are lots of different vehicles to drive, each with different handling. There are sports cars, racing cars, 4x4s, tanks, helicopters, speedboats, the list goes on and on. There are also several opponents of varying skill, ranging from Dire to Ace. In the tournament, you have to race against three other computer opponents of your choice over a series of courses. If you come first or second, you qualify, win a new Micro Machine to put in the display cabinet at the end of each race and go onto the next race. If you come third or fourth, you lose a life (you have three to start with). In the bonus rounds you drive a truly enormous 4x4 over a pretty tough course within a very strict time limit..

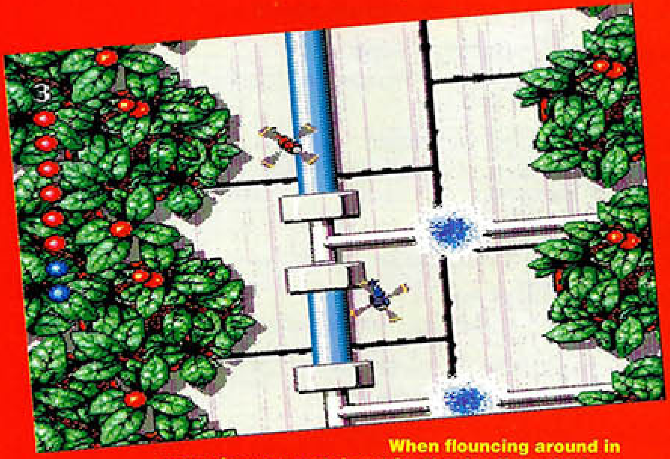
If, however, you're not the solitary type, try the two-player option. It's not split screen like some of the better two-player race games, but in this case, it's the originality that counts. Because the cars are so resilient, you can bump each other about all over the place. So, the idea is to get so far ahead that the opponent disappears off the end of the screen. If this happens, the "win meter" at the side of the screen moves one notch in your favour. Eventually, you or your opponent will score five or so points over and above the opponent and win. Of course if you stay together the whole time, the winner is decided by the first one to cross the line after a certain number of laps have been completed. Hurrah!



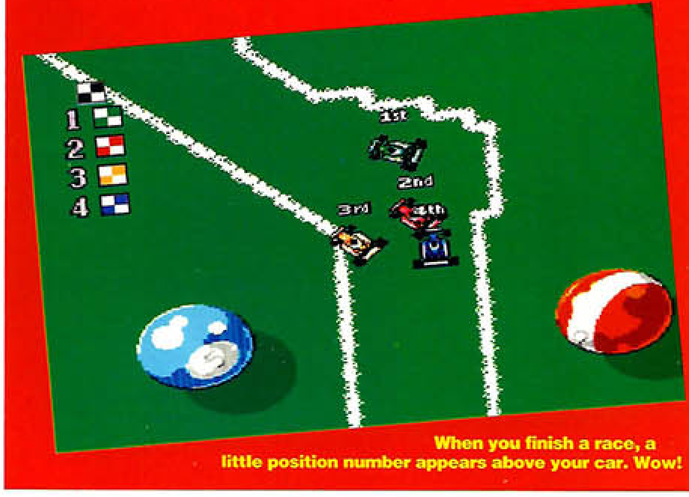
This level takes place on a Black and Decker Workmate (or something like that)



This is where you choose who to race against – best stick to crap girlie opponents



When flouncing around in your chopper, watch out for the deadly sprinklers



When you finish a race, a little position number appears above your car. Wow!

BALLISTIC

Alan Welsman

RELEASES FOR 1993: *Bubsy The Bobcat In Clawed Encounters Of The Furred Kind, Hardball 3, Jack Niclaus Power Golf.*

> **"Ballistic will continue to support the Mega Drive system as long as the general public continue to buy the games – that, incidentally, does not appear to be a problem at the moment"**

JANUARY

Ariel: The Little Mermaid – Sega

Another cute platform game using the Disney licence. Let's hope the excellent soundtrack from the film can be converted as well.

B-Bomb – Sega USA

More strange platform action from Sega, including a guest appearance from Sonic. Strange indeed.

Mega Lo Mania – Virgin

Teach your people to fight, make weapons and (best of all) make babies in this world domination simulation.

Ecco – Sega

You're out to save the world. Hard enough for a bloke, but in this one you're a dolphin.

FEBRUARY

Another World – Virgin

Very atmospheric 3D worlds and animation, as well as logic puzzles, fill this game right to the brim.

Mic and Mac – Virgin

This incredibly cute platform game has some lovely animation. Save the world from the evil slime and then pop off to McDonalds for a quick burger.

Superman – Virgin

Here's more superhero action to add to your software collection. Help Superman save the world and make it a better place in which to live (ahhh).

NO DATES...

Batman: Revenge Of The Joker – Sunsoft

The joker is back. This is nothing to do with any of the films and is more akin to the actual comics than anything else.

Championship Bowling – Mentrix

Tenpin bowling doesn't exactly appeal to me as a sport, but this one has a two-player mode, a tournament, and all sorts of other options.

Clue – Parker Bros

Board games are becoming quite popular at the moment (*Monopoly* is due out soon) and *Clue* (known as Cluedo in England) should be fun.

Dinosaurs for Hire – Sega

Sega are being very quiet about this one. Don't expect it until at least Easter of next year. When we know what it's all about, we'll let you know.

F19 – Microprose

The masters of the flight sim have finally started making games for the Mega Drive. This in-depth sim should be amazing.

F15 Strike Eagle 2 – Microprose

With the emphasis on battle rather than just flying, this flight sim should be a real stonker. And it should be hard too.

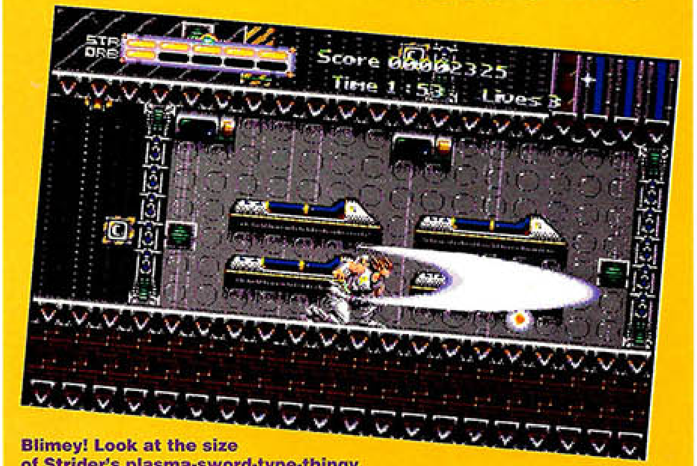
Fatal Fury – Takara

This is a Neo-Geo game, that someone decided would make a good Mega Drive game. It's basically a *Street Fighter 2* rip-off and although the arcade version has some amazing sound, we can't yet tell you what the Mega Drive version will be like.

STRIDER 2

US Gold • December

US Gold dig him up and give him a second wind

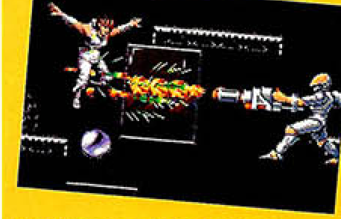


Blimey! Look at the size of Strider's plasma-sword-type-thingy

How we gasped at the amazing visuals, how we laughed with joy at the exhilarating gameplay, how we trembled with fear at the monstrous guardians, how w... what? No, no, not *Strider 2* – I'm on about the first game. You must all remember what a stunning title it was at the time, and now, not a moment too soon, comes the sequel.

If you're all wondering how the programmers could possibly have improved upon the original, well, we can't tell you yet, but you'll find that out in next month's review. But while we're all assembled here, why don't we take a closer look at the game?

The main character is much the same as he was in the first game. He can still perform mind-boggling cartwheels and whip his flashing blade around like nobody's business. What's more his ceiling- and wall-clinging abilities haven't diminished at all either. But if you're after a challenge, from what we've seen so far it's going to be pretty tough. In the time we had to preview the thing, we were only able to get part of the way through level two. The first level places you in the Forbidden Forest, where vicious plants spring out of the ground and mechanical birds swoop down from the trees. Eventually, you reach a building, fight off a few droids, then do battle with a flying guardian thing. We must admit, the guardian wasn't all that big or impressive, so we'll have to hope things improve a bit later on.



Strider gets a packet of roast nuts from this intergalactic barman

Level two takes place in Castle Metropolis, and things get incredibly hard very quickly. There are deadly laser beams all over the place, which would be bad enough on their own, but there are all sorts of opponents milling around too. At times the task in hand seems completely impossible. Still, better that it's too hard than too easy methinks.

These early stages don't look quite like the *Strider*-beating stuff we were hoping for from this long-awaited sequel, but we'll have to wait and see how it shapes up. Stick with us.

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Simon Jeffrey

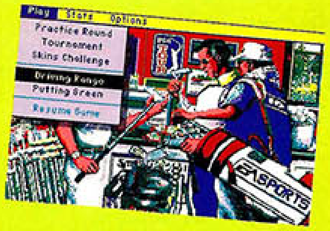
RELEASES FOR 1993: Loads – and EA promise that they're not all sequels. The releases will include some Mega CD stuff.

"Sega have timed *Sonic 2* perfectly. Their hype has stolen much of the *Streetfighter 2* thunder that Nintendo have been building for Christmas. In '93 the great titles will sell extremely well, the lower-quality stuff will begin to bomb"

PGA TOUR GOLF 2

Electronic Arts • January

More courses, tournaments and options. But is it more fun?



Just one of the gripping options screens from *PGA Tour Golf 2*

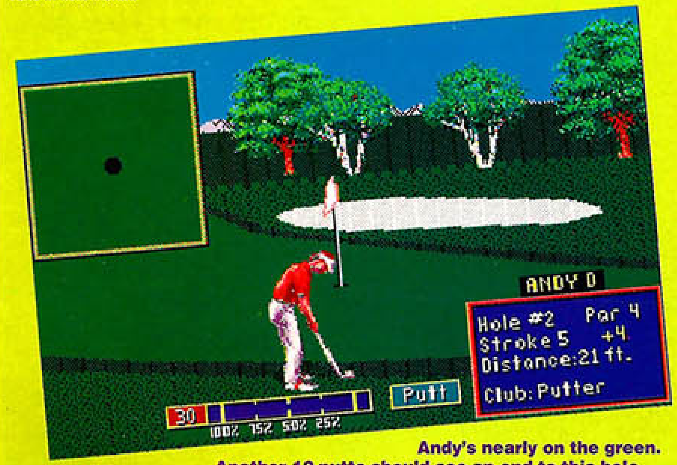
If you've read our mini-interviewettes with the software houses (they run along the bottom of all the pages in this preview section), you'll already know that next year, EA will be concentrating more on original products rather than sequels and updates. But just to see the year out, they've supplied us with this – a follow-up to *PGA Tour Golf*, bafflingly called *PGA Tour Golf 2*.

Most of you will already know that *PGA Tour Golf* was pretty damn playable, so it'll come as no surprise that the follow-up is too. There are, however, a few changes.

For a start, three new courses have been added, making a grand total of seven. What's more, you can now take part in an additional three tournaments out of a total of five. Brilliant! But better still is that the skins game (played for money) can now be played on all the courses. Of course, an EA revamp wouldn't really be an EA revamp without lots of added stats for all the perfectionists out there. So there you are, a bigger game all round. But that's not all. One of the neater graphical touches is the Hole Browser, which is basically a fly past of the hole before you actually play it. To be honest, it doesn't really serve any useful purpose, but it does work fairly well and adds an extra layer of polish. Other visual improvements include more elaborate course vegetation, bunkers, trees and so on, plus four different animations of the golfer himself.

The gameplay has also been improved – there's a new draw and fade meter to "improve the physics of the ball". Quite what this means we're not sure at this stage, but heck, we'll enlighten you next month when we actually review the thing.

OH MY GAAAAWD! I almost forgot. The ultimate in improvements, the thing that will lift this game above everything else and establish it as the greatest cartridge ever created... it says "you're the man" when you do a particularly long shot. That's right, speech has been included this time around. Mmm... Tune in next month.



Andy's nearly on the green. Another 12 putts should see an end to this hole

Jester – Sega

Again, the release of this game is a long way off, so we don't know what it's about.

King Of The Monsters – Takara

A one-on-one wrestling game played with monsters instead of people. You can perform some very interesting moves.

Mig 29 – Domark

Who says the Mega Drive can't handle flight sims? Oh, it was you at the back, was it? Well, you were wrong.

Might And Magic 2 – Electronic Arts

The first *Might and Magic* didn't exactly set the world alight, but the sequel is going to be bigger and, let's hope, better.

Nolan Ryan Express – Mentrix

Baseball games could soon overtake American Football games as the most tedious and downright useless software releases. What can possibly be done to make them any better?

Race Drivin' – Tengen

This is the sequel to *Hard Drivin'*. Will it have more courses to make it last longer?. We'll just have to wait and see.

Radical Racing – Atlas

Atlas are new to the Mega Drive and we don't really know what this game is all about. Guess is it's about racing, probably in radical vehicles.

Seven Cities of Gold – Electronic Arts

Another release for the distant future. As soon as we know what it's about, we'll let you know.

Star Odyssey – Sage's Creation

Nope sorry no idea about this one either. Stay tuned.

Terminator (CD) – Virgin

This CD game improves on the original cart version, because it has more levels and some great use of Mega CD technology.

Toys – Absolute

You find yourself transported to a fantastic world full of giant toys in this graphically stunning adventure.

Tiny Toon Adventures – Konami

The Tiny Toons are the toddlers of the Looney Toons world. It's a cartoony platform romp, which should be brill.

Wolf Child – JVC

A bloke gets turned into a wolf in a hideous genetic experiment. So starts this all-action scrolling platform game.

Where's Waldo – US Gold

Based on the books in which you have to find Waldo in a busy environment, this is a game for the kids.

Wing Commander (CD) – Sierra

A classic explore-and-do-things-in-space-game, the depth and size of which are unbelievable. We can't wait.

Zombie High – Electronic Arts

Another title that people at Electronic Arts are being rather quiet about. As soon as we hear more, we'll let you know. Honest.

Next month: Hopefully we should be able to bring you in-depth previews of *Mig 29* and *F15 Strike Eagle* – two amazing flight sims, plus anything else we can get our hands on.

SEGA

Nick Alexander

RELEASES FOR 1993: Lots. And more besides.

> **"We've learnt that by spending time perfecting a game, as in the case of *Sonic 2*, success will come. The lesson is to maintain quality, don't put out too many similar titles and then work them hard"**

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

Electronic Arts • January

Baby elephant in "cutesy platform game" shocker. MEGA investigates...

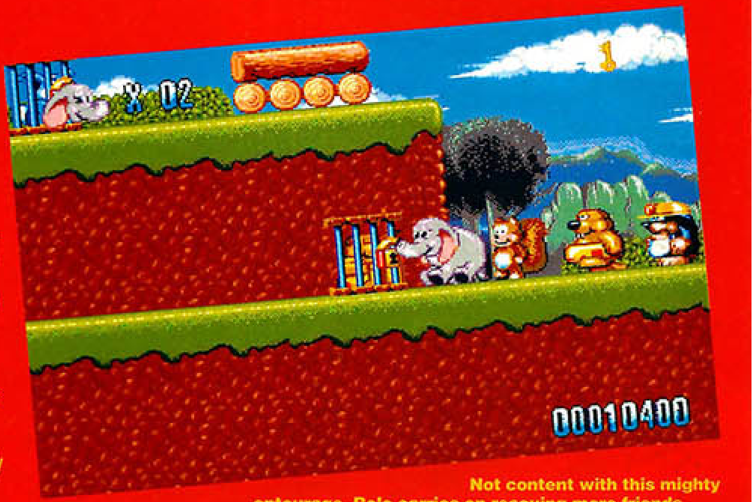
Having completely out-sported themselves, Electronic Arts are, after the success of their *James Pond* games, having another crack at the platform genre with a cutesy game called *Rolo To The Rescue*.

It's going to be a bit of a big one, with 80 levels set over five worlds. There's a sort of map screen a bit like the Mario games, so you don't have to complete all the levels to reach the end. So could it be that EA have come up with a bit of a Mario beater right here on our beloved Mega Drives? Well, you'll have to wait until next month to find that out but in the meantime let's take a look at exactly what *Rolo To The Rescue* is all about.

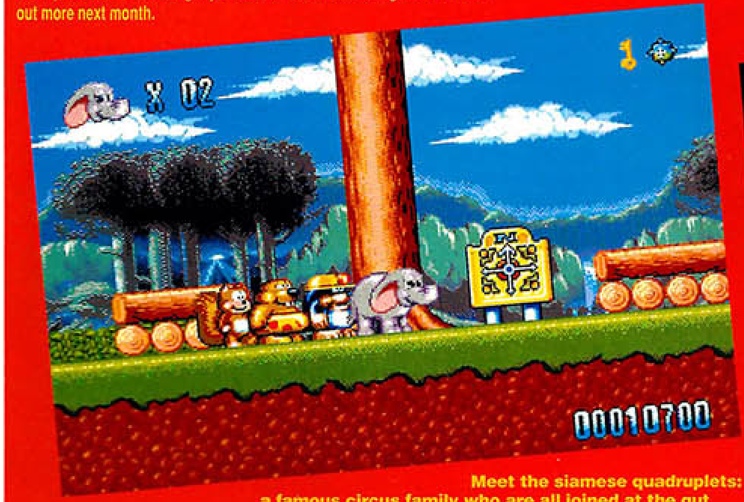
The bad guys in this game are called the McSmiley twins and they're plotting to take over all the zoos and circuses on the planet, and to that end they've gone and kidnapped all the animals. Rolo, a cute little baby elephant, is a bit cheesed off about this, because one of the kidnappers is his mother. So, off goes Rolo to defeat the curious twins.

Each level sees our elephantine friend searching for a key. As he rescues his friends, they join him on his quest and follow him around. And now for the feature that makes Rolo just that little bit different. You can control any of these rescued characters and use them to perform special tasks. For example, you can use moles to burrow through the earth or get the rabbits to do especially high jumps. It's all very unusual and really rather intriguing.

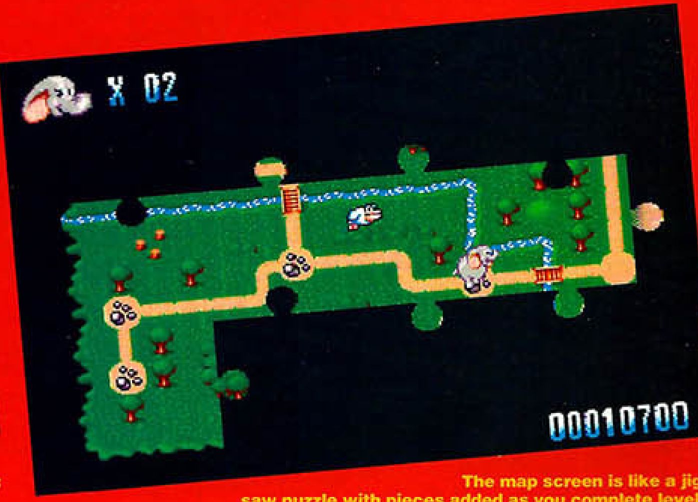
As you might expect from the look of the screenshots (and indeed the fact that *Robocod* went down a storm), the team that brought you *James Pond II* are doing this too. Find out more next month.



Not content with this mighty entourage, Rolo carries on rescuing more friends



Meet the siamese quadruplets: a famous circus family who are all joined at the gut



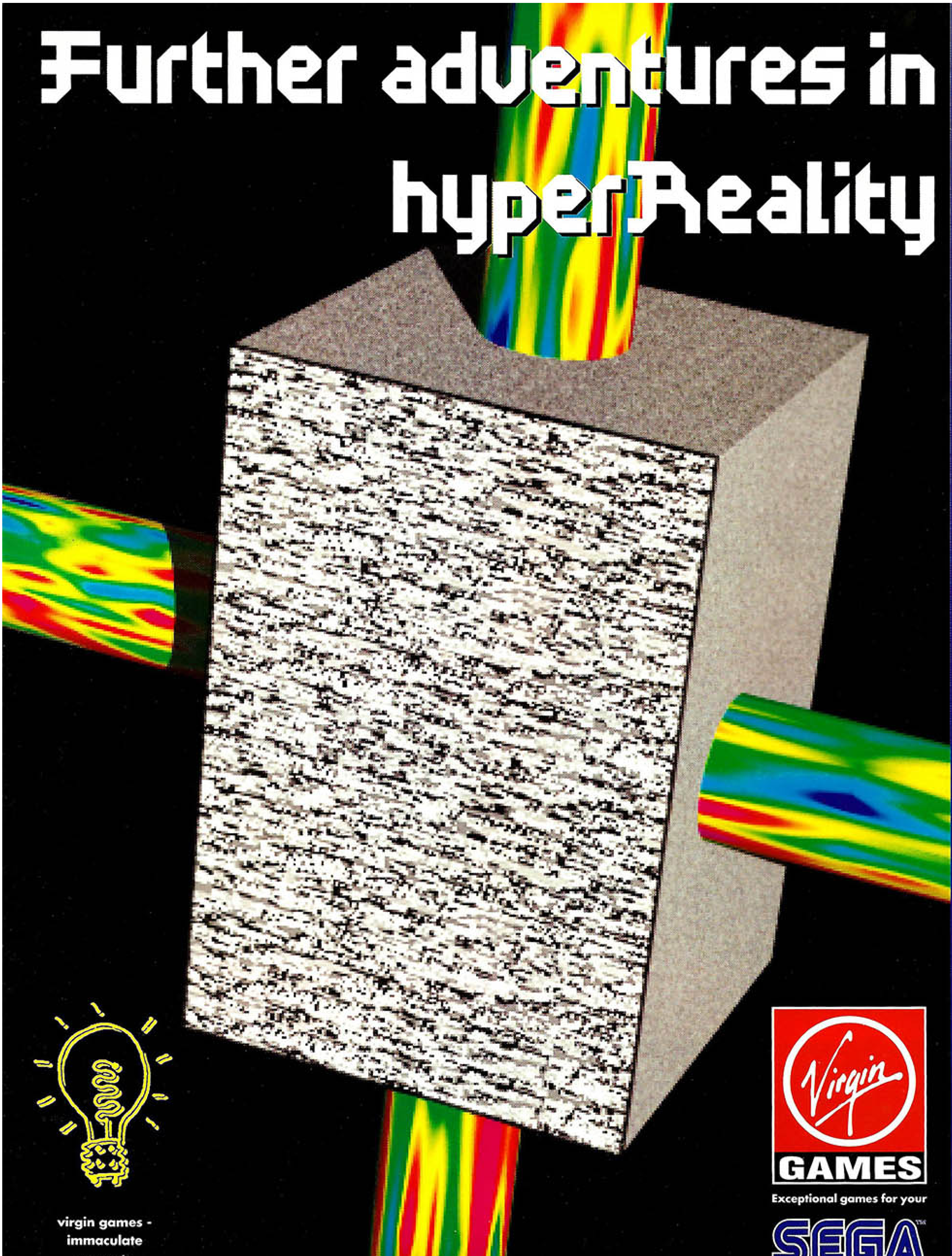
The map screen is like a jig-saw puzzle with pieces added as you complete levels

DOMARK

Anne Dixon

RELEASES FOR 1993: *Mig29 Super Fulcrum*, *Formula One Grand Prix* and a whole load of American Tengen titles such as *Paperboy 2* and *Steel Talons*.

> **"More games will be published with the emphasis being on quality. Mega Drive sales will increase, but emphasis will be on the software, not hardware. Customers won't be as gullible about licensed software. Our commitment is total"**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1993. Even bigger and BETTER software from Virgin Games... For the Mega Drive: McDonald's Global Gladiators, Mega-lo-Mania, Superman, Another World, Muhammed Ali Heavyweight Boxing and Populous 2.
For the Master System: Speedball 2, McDonald's Global Gladiators, Robin Hood - Prince of Thieves and Superman. For the Game Gear: The Terminator, Super Off-Road, Robin Hood - Prince of Thieves and Double Dragon.

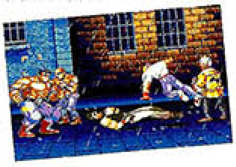
REVIEWS

Come in, sit down, and share in a glass of sherry. It's Christmas, and the MEGA team are stoked again...

Depending on whether you bought this mag before or after Christmas, you'll either be thinking "Ooh isn't this all very jolly and festive?" or possibly "Oh goodness, I feel awful, why don't these idiots just shut up about the season of good bloody will?". But tough, we're feeling festive and we're gonna shout about it.

STREETS OF RAGE 2

"Good King Wenceslas looked out, on *Streets of Rage 2*, murdered folk lay round about, next time it could be you." OK the carol was crap, but this isn't. Turn to page 38.



***Streets of Rage 2*: Mega Drive's best beat-'em-up?**

ROAD RASH 2

"God rest ye merry *Road Rashers*, let no-one overtake, pull right back on that throttle now, and don't you touch that brake, the sequel's almost hit the streets, it's fab and no mistake, oh tidings of fabness on page 48, on page 48, oh tidings of fabness on page 48."

Motorcycle madness for mad bas... (NOOO - Neil)

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

"You'd better not fail, you'd better not die, you'd better not lose, I'm telling you why, *Universal Soldier's* coming to town." Fans of *Turrican 2* should turn to page 46 right now.

***Universal Soldier* reviewed on page 46**

WWF SUPER WRESTLE MANIA

"Oh come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, oh come ye, oh come ye to Bethlehem. Come and behold him, born the King of Angels, oh come let us adore him, oh come let us adore him, oh come let us adore him, Hu-ulk-Hogan." Er...

Spangly pants ahoy in *Super Wrestle Mania*

JANUARY

Streets Of Rage 2 38
Indiana Jones III 42
Super Wrestle Mania 44
Universal Soldier 46
Road Rash 2 48
Death Duel 50
Steel Talons 52
Mystical Fighter 54
Terminator 2 55
Shadow of the Beast 2 56
Chiki Chiki Boys 57
Black Hole Assault 58
Gemfire 59
Risky Woods 60
Rampart 61
Super HQ 62

RATINGS

It's the easy-to-read rating system. Take a look.

How many players can play the game at any one time?

Skill levels? Yes please. Here we tell you how many there are

How many lives are you given? And how many continues?

A game with this icon has a password system!

Even better, a game with this icon comes with battery back-up!

Sonic 2's got 20, but *EA Hockey* hasn't got any. Stages that is

Import carts are shown with one of these logos, from America or Japan

GRAPHICS 9

●●●●●●●●●●

Five game components are rated individually out of ten. Here's what we look for in each:

GRAPHICS: Clear presentation, animation, scrolling, collision-detection, design, speed

SOUND: Music, FX, samples and speech

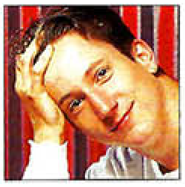
GAMEPLAY: Movement, control mechanism, difficulty, challenge design and fun element

GAME SIZE: How much does the game offer? Are the levels big? Is there a league option?

ADDICTION: Er, is it addictive?

"What we think of the game, be it praise or a slagging"

WHO'S WHO?



NEIL WEST

We asked Neil what he was doing over the Christmas period, and he said it was a toss up between manning the soup wagon to help the homeless and going to America for two weeks. After wrestling with his conscience for ten seconds he was seen on a coach to Gatwick throwing packets of Batchelors Cup-A-Soup out of the window at passing bag ladies. What a love.

ANDY DYER

"I'm having a traditional Christmas," said Andy, "which basically involves a nightmare shopping spree trading blows with vicious pensioners, watching my three dozen nephews and nieces dribble, scream and bite each other's ears off, drinking lots of beer, working up the courage to wear that hideous sweater that I'm bound to get, then coming back to work and exchanging lies with the team about what a great time we all had."

PAUL MELLERICK

"Well, I intend to have a slap-up Christmas lunch, drink some wine, then don my slippers and pyjamas and relax by writing a complete solution to *Lemmings*. Then on Boxing Day I might try to complete *Desert Strike* for the fifth time. Then I'll probably come back to work until New Year's Eve when at precisely midnight I will play a game called 'getting totally and utterly drunk and feeling rather ill' simulator – my favourite."

AMANDA DYSON

"I'm a married woman now, so in order to fulfil my marital yuletide duties I'm going to get completely stressed out for a few weeks, get up at dawn to prepare a truly epic meal, start insisting that people ring up their crusty old aunties to thank them for the foul tie and handkerchief set they gave them, and then force my bloke to eat turkey sarnies for the next decade. Well, my mother did it, so now it's my turn."

GAME REVIEW

Meet the big brother of the Mega Drive's best ever beat-'em-up. After a year of re-programming, improving and expanding (this game uses twice as much memory as *Sonic 2*), it looks great, sounds amazing and plays like a dream. But just how long will it take you to finish it? Paul Mellerick delves deep...

First off, we've got to tell you that this game was reviewed under slightly strange circumstances: we had only three hours playtime (read the SEGA GAMES UNDER LOCK AND KEY box on page 40 for all the sordid details). We are, however, convinced we've seen enough of the game to give you a fair and balanced review – we wouldn't bother printing it otherwise, it's as simple as that.

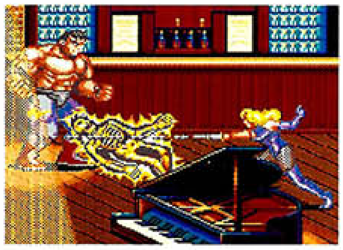
So, with that little qualification out of the way (at least we're being honest – we could name other mags that review games just from seeing screenshots), let's get stuck straight into one of the most entertaining, best-looking, aggression-channelling games that's ever been my pleasure to play.

One year after Axel, Blaze (complete with those white knickers) and Adam beat Mr Big (the final boss), felled the crime syndicate, and faced the awful moral dilemma of whether to take over as boss or return to a life of doing good and helping old ladies across the road, the crime syndicate is back. And just to prove that these chaps mean business, they kidnap Adam (the black guy from the original game) and are holding him to ransom.

So, you know what you've got to do? Flex those biceps and get stuck in to those bad guys right? Right.

And so it is that Axel and Blaze (the other two original characters) are joined by Max (incredibly big guy) and Skate (incredibly hip, roller-blading dude) on a skull-crunching, leg-breaking, occasionally pole-wielding, baddy-bashing romp through some of the worst bad guys you'll ever see.

> **This is one of the most entertaining, aggression-channelling games ever**



Electra's whip is deadly, so attack her from the air, or else

RECIPE FOR RAGE

So why is it so good? What's so special about *Streets Of Rage 2* then? Well, let's take a look at what goes into making an excellent beat-'em-up. OK, so these aren't the sort of ingredients that most chef's would find particularly appetising, so think of this as, erm, Delia Smith's Cookery Curse perhaps. For your ideal beat-'em-up, you will need:

1. A simultaneous two-player option

And *Streets of Rage* has got two of 'em – two players can take on the might of Mr Big's henchmen together (interacting to perform some truly special moves: catapulting off the back of the other player, for example), or you can simply elect to play a duel game and beat the stuffing out of each other with no one else around to put you off. Now, although this isn't really comparable to *Streetfighter 2* (they're two completely different games) it makes an entertaining add-on to the conventional gameplay, as you can now put to an end once and for all those "which character is the best?" arguments: simply put them head-to-head and see who comes out tops.

In a "proper" two-player game (two heroes versus the bad guys) you can't select the same characters of course, but there are quite a few different combinations for you to try out. You can also change your character in the middle of a game if you choose to continue after dying.

2. Lots of versatile, accessible moves

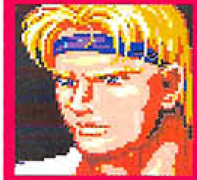
Look at classic coin-op beat-'em-ups like *Final Fight* and *Street Fighter 2*, and you'll see what I mean: bags of easy to control, devastating moves, which make playing that much more fun. Novice players will get by with just standard punches and kicks whereas more advanced players will have mastered

Turn over

WHO'S WHO?

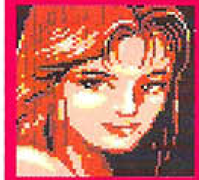
Each character has his or her own background and special abilities. Here's a quick run-down on each of the characters. Take a look, and then decide which person you'd like to be. If you like punching, then you'll like being Max, but if you'd like to be a good all rounder, try Axel. Alternatively, you might like to get your hands on Blaze, but then wouldn't we all?

AXEL



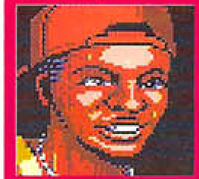
Axel's your typical all-American white dude. He's fast, and has a jump attack and an awesome special move.

BLAZE



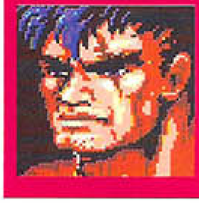
Don't get on the wrong side of Blaze, because although she looks small she packs a mean punch and a hefty special kick.

SKATE



Skate never takes off his Roller Blades. He's small but fast, and he jumps on people and bashes them on the head.

MAX



Max is slow, but he is the most powerful dude in the game. Concentrate on punching and leave the jumping to someone else.

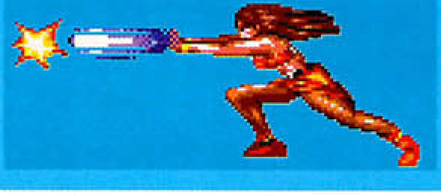
STREETS O

IT'S ALL IN THE WAY THEY MOVE

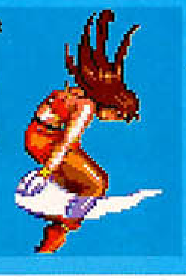
Each character has special moves and little tricks, which you'll need to use if you're going to topple the big boss. Here are a few of the moves we've discovered. Impressive, aren't they?

Press the joypad twice in the same direction and the punch button for Axel's Running Punch, or (as long as you've got a reasonable amount of power) press button A for his Flaming Punch. If you're short of energy and you press the A button, you'll perform the Uppercut (which looks uncannily like a Dragon Punch). Blaze is very acrobatic, and pressing button A when she's got lots of power uses her Flame Ball Punch. Pressing a direction twice in a row with button A makes Blaze use her Double Flip attack. Finally, Skate does a Break Dancing attack when he's got lots of power and when you press button A.

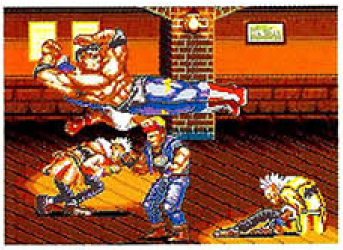
We found these special moves in only a very short time, so they are not that hard to find.



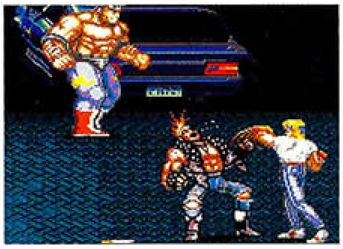
Flaming Punch: This is very similar to Ryu's Psycho Fire punch in *Street Fighter 2*. This is Blaze's special move, and it should be used when you want to get rid of someone quickly at close range



Double Flip: A quick attack, that will take out a long row of bad guys. Best used for a long-range attack on a boss



See that big boy fly? I wouldn't like to be on the end of that one



Axel's a bit low on power, so his punch isn't as flash this time around

THEN AGAIN...

CONTINUE 3
GAME OVER
TIME 36
x1
2UP-000000

Streets of Rage is a classic, but *Streets 2* is an essential purchase whether you've got the original or not

GET A GRIP!

← → Moves your selected character left and right

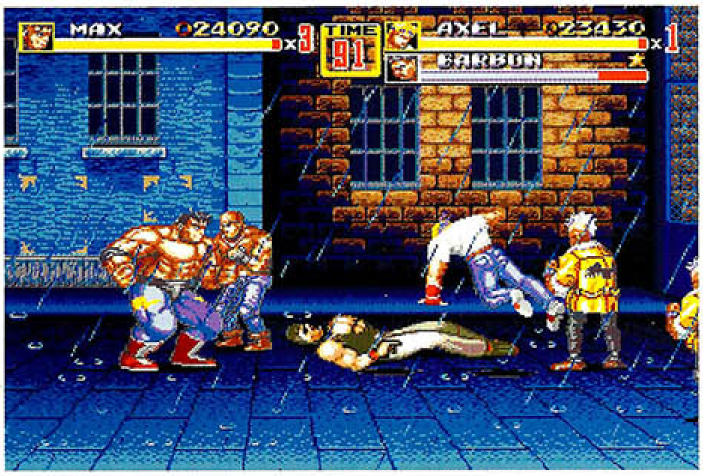
↑ ↓ Moves your selected character up and down

Ⓐ Activates your special move, be it a Flame Punch, an Uppercut, a Break Dance attack, a double flip etc.

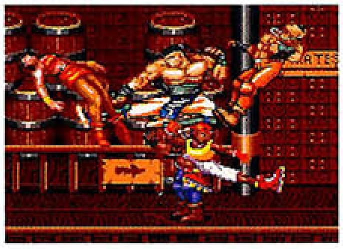
Ⓑ Activates your normal attack

Ⓒ Makes you jump

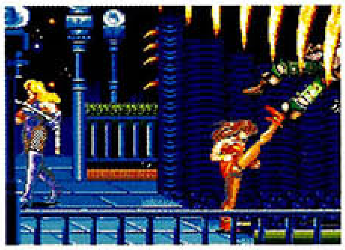
NB: Using A, B and C in various combinations will give you more special moves



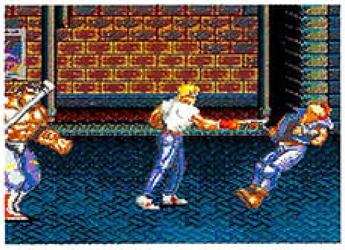
This is Barbon, the first level boss. Axel has just thrown him to the floor. Don't just stand there Max, beat up that black guy and then help me out



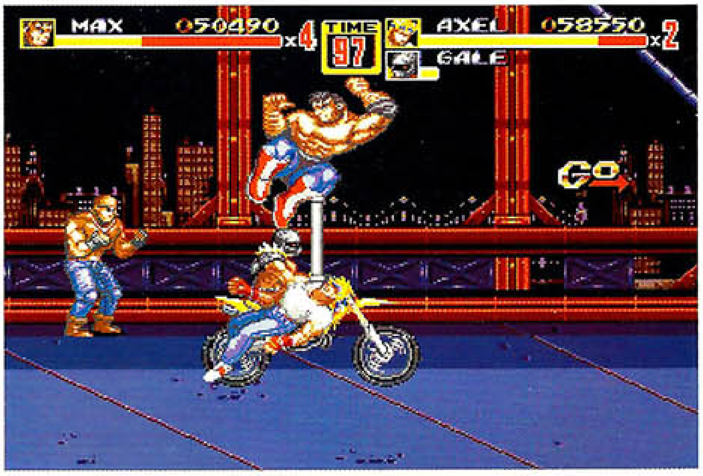
Skate is doing well, but it looks like Blaze could do with some help



Wow, what a kick. And check out that white underwear



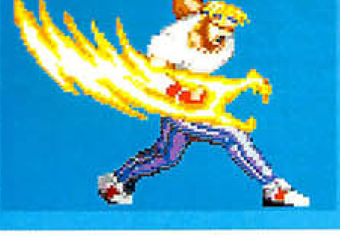
Max may have the drain-pipe, but a knife is pretty useful too



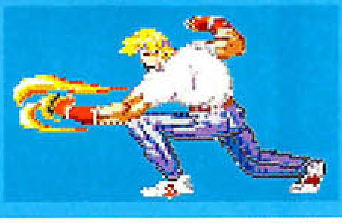
These bikes are very nasty. You've got to time your jump correctly (like Max has) or you get hit (like Axel). Bet that smarts

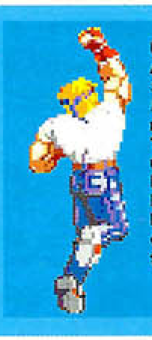
F RAGE 2

Flame Punch: Takes a lot of power away from a bad guy, but also costs you some energy



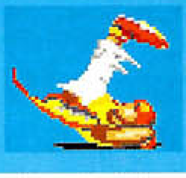
Small Flame Punch: If you're low on energy, you'll do a smaller flame punch. It's not as devastating, but it's still useful



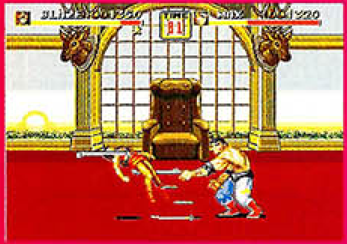


Uppercut: Another *Street Fighter 2* move. This looks uncannily like a Ryu Dragon Punch, don't you think?

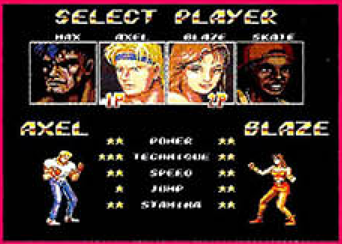
Break Dance: This may look silly, but if anybody gets in Skate's way, they'll soon know about it



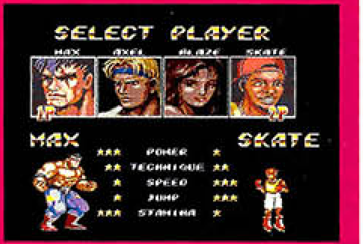
I'M BETTER THAN YOU! OH, NO YOU'RE NOT!



If, after defeating the big boss, you still fancy some more action, try taking on your friend in the two-player head-to-head duel



You can even both choose the same character (player one will be coloured red and player two will be all dressed in blue)



Or try the big brute strength of Max against the small but fast Skate and see who comes out on top. Use any combination you like really

the more advanced moves.

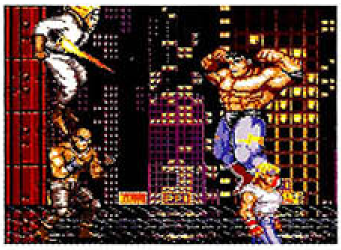
The potential that the three buttons of the Mega Drive control pad offer is exploited well, and the moves available change depending on which character you're playing, where your character is in relation to other bad guys, the joypad movements, your life gauge and (obviously) which buttons you press.

3. Variety in gameplay

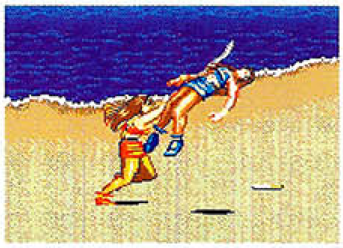
Each big bad guy you'll come across has his own name and power bar (similar to *Final Fight*) and each will require a different strategy of attack. As well as this tactical element, alternative weapons are available to any player who bothers to take a look around him (or her). You can pick up drain pipes, knives and other objects, which you can throw, as well as the less menacing but infinitely more life-restoring food icons, which will restore lost energy.

4. Slick presentation, graphics, sound and animation

The graphics are wonderful. Take a look at the screenshots for an initial idea, then just take my word for it that they move as well as any game you've ever seen. Next come the sonics, and all I can say is that the guy who programmed the sound is a genius. Evidently, he has recently spent some time in England checking out Rave sounds – it shows. *Streets Of Rage 2's* soundtrack is even better than that of *Sonic 2* in my opinion.



Max is showing off again, but Axel has seen it all before. Zzzzz!



One on one, Blaze vs Blaze. Who's going to win? Blaze, I think

5. A large, tough challenge

Ah. Now it's a sorry sign of the state of video games today that most of you were probably expecting the "but" to appear here, but you'd be right. As with *Sonic 2* and as with *World Of Illusion*, challenge is the only aspect of design that lets *Streets Of Rage 2* down. But not quite all is lost, it's easily sorted out.

Because this is the first 16-Mbit game, we were definitely expecting a huge game. *Streets of Rage 2* can't exactly be described as huge, but it is large. There are eight levels (the same number as in the original) and there are levels within levels and also mid-level bosses. The problem is that the start-up options are just too generous. On easy level with max lives and max continues you're really given just about enough of an advantage to let a short-sighted dog get well over halfway through the game on his first attempt.

The solution? Do yourself a favour and simply play the game on the tougher levels – but then that's down to you lot and how you get on with your will power.

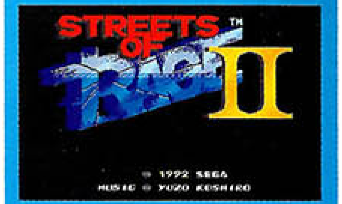
SO TO CONCLUDE?

Streets of Rage 2 is a lovely game. It has all (just) the right ingredients and delivers them with genuine class. It's more fun, slicker and generally a lot better to play than even the arcade version of *Final Fight.* Yes, a Mega Drive game that's better than an arcade game.

This is one of the most polished games I've ever seen on the Mega Drive and you've definitely got to check it out. It improves over the original immensely and bodes well for the future of 16-Mbit Mega Drive software. But be warned, you may finish this game very quickly. And if, when you've finished a game, you don't come back for more, then maybe this isn't your sort of game full stop.

Well, there we go. I've tried to write the best review I can having played the game for only a short time, but I strongly suggest that you try this game before you buy. You might even like to write to Sega telling them that you only buy a game when you've read its review in MEGA. You never know, it might help everyone get a better deal.

® Paul Mellerick



PUBLISHER: Sega

PRICE: £44.99

RELEASE: December '92

CARTRIDGE: 16 Mbit (whouf!)

CONTACT: Sega 071 727 8070

Try to bring the crime lords down by yourself or get the help of a friend

Easy, normal or hard levels of skill. Hard is your best bet

You start with three lives and each one has a power bar

No battery back-up or password. That'd make things even easier

There are eight levels with sub levels

GRAPHICS 9

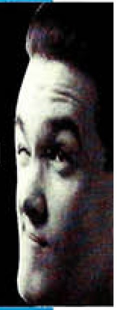
SOUND 9

GAMEPLAY 7

GAME SIZE 7

ADDICTION 9

"The best beat-'em-up on the Mega Drive. Just make sure you use the hard setting with no continues – it's for your own good"



SCORE WITHHELD!

Having not played this game for as long as we feel necessary, MEGA refuse to risk giving it an incorrect score. Read the box on the left for the full details

SEGA GAMES UNDER LOCK AND KEY

This month Sega stopped sending advance copies of carts out to video game mags. Among other (unfathomable to us) reasons, they're worried that pirated copies of games are becoming a big problem and that one of the main ways in which they "get out" is through the hands of magazines which have advance copies.

Quite how we would pirate them, how we could possibly benefit from pirating them even if we had the technology (are we really going to start manufacturing our own dodgy carts? I don't think so...), and why we should be stupid enough to pirate Sega's games when the versions we're sent are especially "finger printed" (it's easy to tell where the pirate versions originate from) is not explained.

But the up-shot of all this is that we now have to visit Sega premises if we want to review a game. We can't review it in our own time, we can't spend anywhere near as much time playing the games as we would like to, and there's no going back to a game to clear up any last-minute queries we may need to sort out.

ALL mags are in the same position, so treat reviews of Sega brand games claiming "long-term playability" with caution – it's possible that the reviewer never really got the chance to find out.

We're doing our best to resolve the situation, but we just thought you ought to be told. If you agree with our stance of not rating a game until we've played it properly, or if you think we should simply give a game the best rating we can, please let us know. Right to "Sega Reviews", MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

THE QJ ProPad

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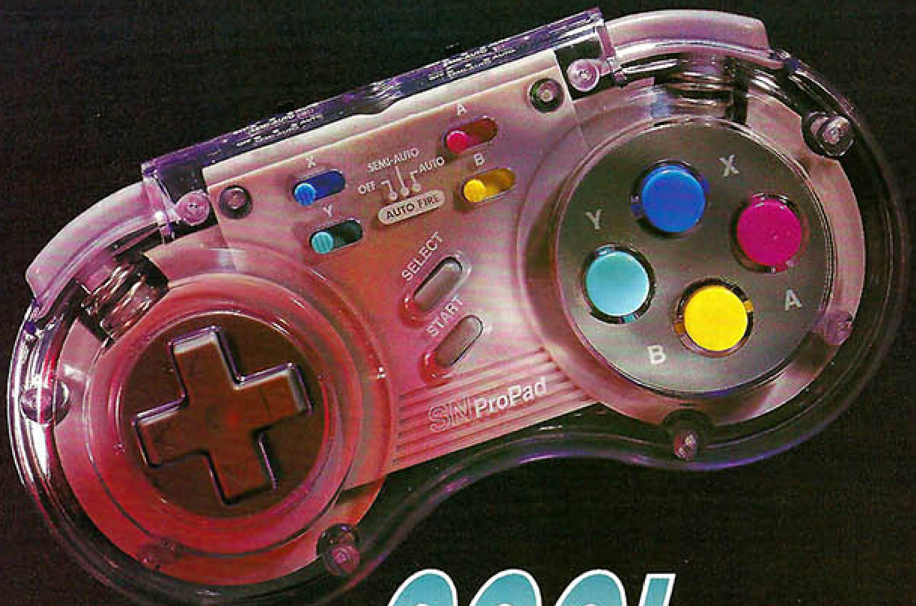
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OFF
AUTO
AUTO FIRE
A
B
SELECT
START
X
Y
A
B
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INDIANA JON
AND THE LAST CRUS

The man with the hat is back. He's sexy, he's 6 feet 2 inches tall and he likes using a whip. Yes, you've guessed it, it's Paul Mellerick

After last month's disappointment with *Batman Returns* (40% in issue three of MEGA), I wasn't exactly keen to try out the latest film tie-in, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Thankfully, US Gold have really done some good work with this one and although it may not be the best game in the world, it is pretty good.

The real thing that lifts Indy Jones out of the film tie-in doldrums is the fact that the game does actually follow scenes from the film. And you might even get a better idea of how to play the game from watching the film, because the tie-in really is that close. But before we go into that any deeper, let me explain just exactly what Indy is doing here.

Indy's Dad has been kidnapped. Now normally, Indy wouldn't have any problems rescuing him, but this time he's up against the German army in the 1930s, so he's got real problems.

The reason they've kidnapped his Dad is that he's found the location of the Holy Grail. It's all heavy stuff, but it's essential to your success in the game.

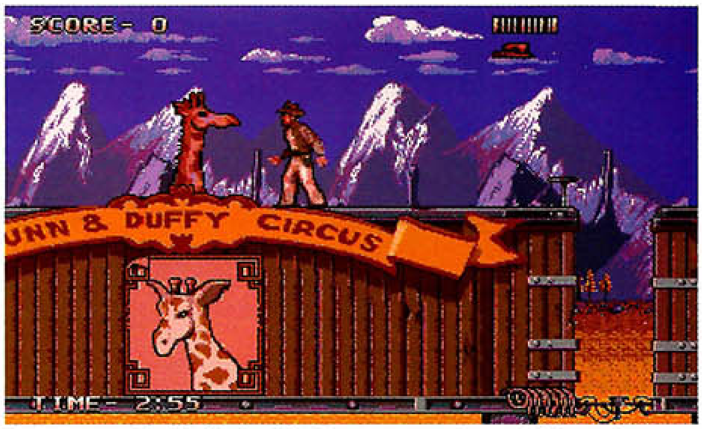
Anyway, the Holy Grail is reputed to have great powers, and that is (understandably enough) why the German army wants it. Indy decides that the best course of action is to get the chalice and then use it to rescue his Dad.

This game is split into five levels, and, in the guise of Indy, you must get through these levels and find the Holy Grail. You've got your father's notes, which tell you where you need to go, but how are you gonna get there?

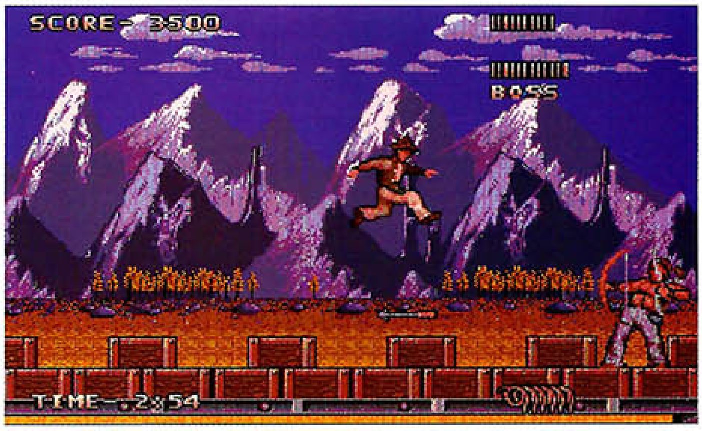
Travel from the Caves of Utah, to Venice and then to the Grail. Each level is very different from the last, not in terms of playability, more in terms of graphics, sound and the bad guys you deal with.

Although we've seen this type of game before, the programmers have used some little tricks to make it that bit more interesting. Not only can you despatch of the bad guys with your whip, but, as in the film, you can use it to swing over

> **The game sticks very closely to the plot of the film**



Er, excuse me Mr Giraffe, but I don't suppose you know which way I go along this train, only I'm a bit lost? Oh, please yourself then



And hup, two, three, four, and over arrow, two, three, four, down again. And repeat ten times for that lovely slim, trimmer tummy

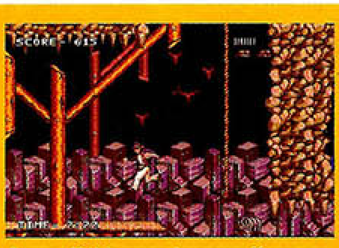
Who put those rocks there? Still, I can jump that... I hope

SCORE- 0
DUNN & DUFFY CIRC

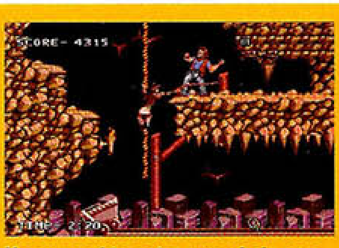
A punch in the head is a good as a ride on a train (What? – Neil)

FOR STARTERS

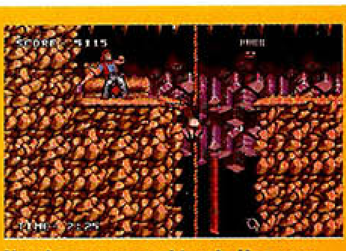
Although each level is fairly straightforward, there are some hidden bits which can reveal much needed power-ups. Take a look at what we mean as we take you through the first level. It's not that difficult, but we thought you might like to know what awaits you as you make your way through to the end. The boss at the end isn't hard, but be careful when collecting the Cross of Cornado. Why? Well you'll just have to take a look if you want to find out.



Jump off this rope, because if you go all the way down, you'll land in water

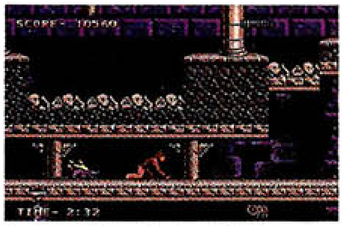


If you need to get a guy who's on a ledge, whip him from the rope



Here's your second torch. Use your whip as before, and you can pick it up

ES
ADE



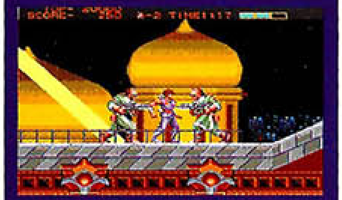
See that rat behind you? That's your mother that is

dangerous gaps.This is one of the great graphical touches in the game.

The graphics and animation are very nice and the soundtrack is great, just like in the film. The presentation is slightly odd, in that each level is introduced by a 1930s film sequence (including a tattered negative), but on the whole the game is very polished.

Indy moves really well and little things like being able to control your jump and fire when he's in the air, make the game all the more playable.

THEN AGAIN...



Strider's got a bit of a problem here. Which way should he go?

Strider is not a direct comparison, but it's similar in a lot of ways. It may be showing its age, but it's a slick, fun-to-play platform game and, strangely enough, US Gold are currently producing *Strider 2* – see page 33.

FRUSTRATING FEATURES

Unfortunately there are a few things in here that make the game somewhat frustrating. Falling off a platform results in instant death, even if you land in water. Also, the recoil that your suffer when you get hit can also cause you to lose your life. And why, when getting hit by a gun takes a couple of bits off your life bar, does getting punched take away the same amount? It's very strange and all very unnecessary. I suppose these little er, niggles, do make the game harder, but I always thought that if you died in a game, it was a direct result of your own mistakes, and not because you got shot and the recall sent you down a bottomless pit. Oh well, I must have been mistaken...

GET A GRIP!

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Moves Indy left or right through the level, or up and down ladders

Ⓐ If your whip power is low, you can always punch someone using button A

Ⓑ Makes you jump, but time your jumps carefully so you don't fall down

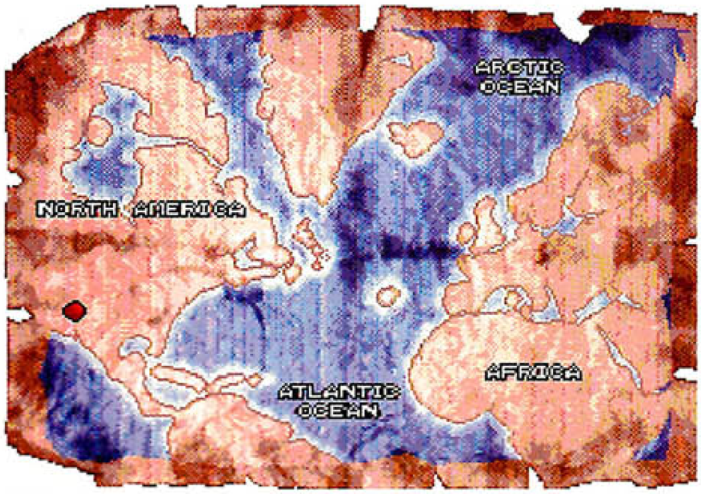
Ⓒ If you need to get through lots of bad guys, using button C will whip them

Progress through the game really is a case of remembering where you went wrong and making sure you don't do it again. The levels are large, but the route is self-explanatory, so you won't get lost.

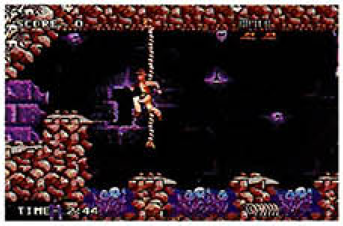
The end-of-level baddies aren't really that much of a problem, and once you've figured out how to kill them, you're fine. The gameplay is samey, but each level changes distinctly from the last, leaving you with just enough of an urge to see what'll happen further on.

The sad reality is that you will die in this game, and more often than not, it'll be because of something silly. You've got three lives and three continues, but (for once) you won't finish this game is a couple of days. If you can get past the little niggles with the gameplay and you like a high frustration factor in games, then this may well turn you on.

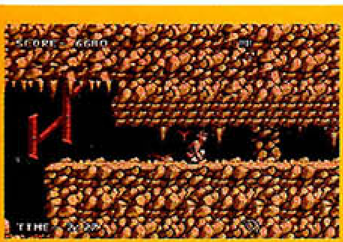
Ⓜ Paul Mellerick



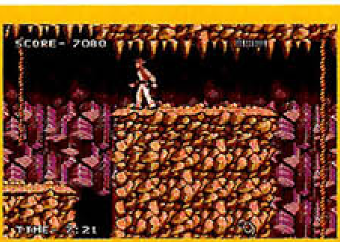
You're ready, and waiting to find the Holy Grail, but you've got a lot of ground to cover before you get there



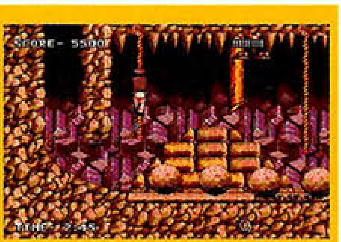
The third of five levels, and things are really getting tough now



Crawl under the spikes that move, and whip the ones that don't



Jump this gap to reach the boss, but watch your head on the spikes



Beat the boss, collect the cross, and jump on the rope. Easy

INDIANA JONES
and the
LAST CRUSADE
REPROGRAMMED GAME © 1992 U.S. GOLD
LICENSED BY SEGA ENTERPRISES
GAME DESIGN AND PROGRAM
TIERTEX LTD.

PUBLISHER: US Gold

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: December '92

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: US Gold 021 356 3388

There's only one Indy Jones!

SKILL! Two skill levels: easy (ha!) and hard (sure is!)

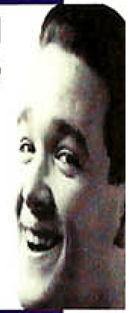
You've got a power bar for each life, three lives and three continues!

No battery back-up or passwords

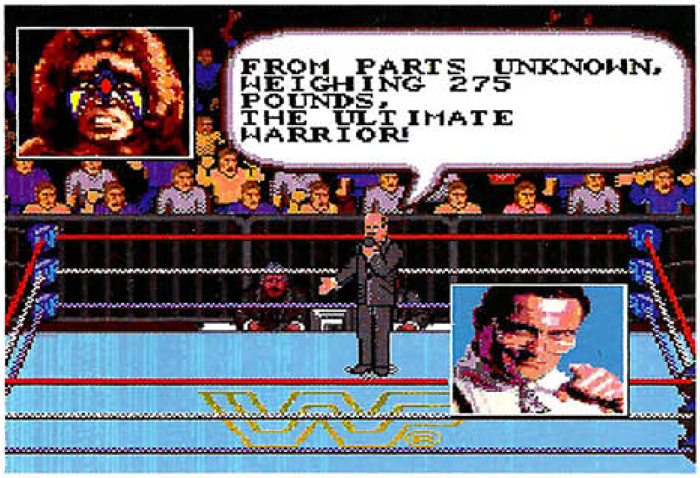
Five large levels – good luck!

GRAPHICS	8	●●●●●●●●○○
SOUND	7	●●●●●●●○○○
GAMEPLAY	5	●●●●●○○○○○
GAME SIZE	5	●●●●●○○○○○
ADDICTION	6	●●●●●●○○○○

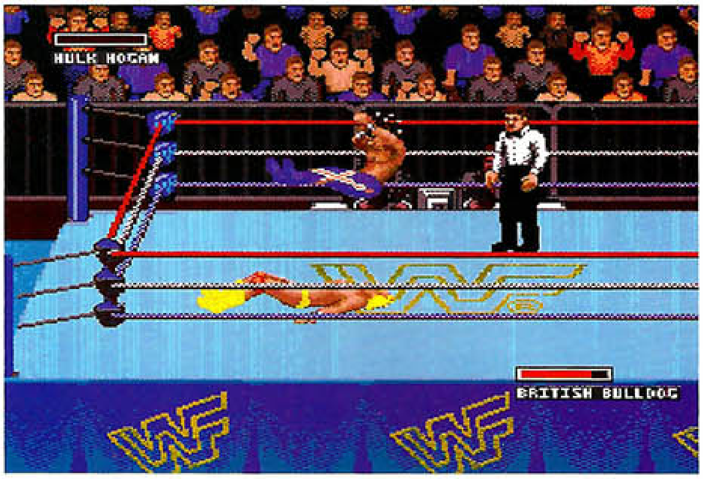
"Annoying and frustrating, but definitely worth a look. Nice usage of a film license for a change"



72 PERCENT



The Ultimate Warrior versus Irwin R. Schyster. Don't know about you, but my money is on the man with the face paint. What is that stuff anyway?



And here we have the British Bulldog, and he's just about to land his big butt all over Hulk Hogan's face. Lucky old Hogan...

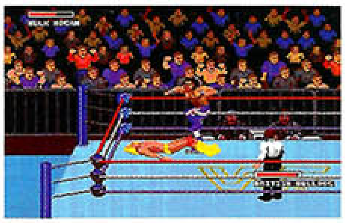
WWF SUPER WRE

He's hot, he's sexy, he's creamy and he's, erm, very skinny when you stand him next to the Ultimate Warrior. His name: Neil West, his weight: 100lbs, his diagnosis: dweeb

Dear me, this American wrestling lark's a load of cobblers, isn't it? It's more fun to watch than the puny efforts of such British lame ducks as Big Daddy or Mad Mick McManus I'll agree, but those large American wrestlers are quite simply cack. Well, come on, American wrestling is about as believable as the plot-lines in Beverly Hills 90210, isn't it?

WWF Super Wrestle Mania (the game), features all the best known American wrestlers, pixellated and shrunk in their tie-dies. Hulk Hogan, Papa Shango, Irwin Schyster, Randy Savage, Ted DiBiase, Ultimate Warrior and Shawn Michaels are all there, complete with a couple of those ineffectual referees and the bald commentator with the large microphone.

There are several different ways of playing the game, but as with all beat-'em-ups, the most fun's to be had when you play against another humanoid. It's possible to control any of the wrestlers featured in the game in either a one-on-one match, a tag team match, a survivor series, or a tournament. Experimentation has shown that the tag team matches are the most fun, not only because they last a bit longer, but because dragging Hulk's sorry behind over to the ropes in the hope of a tag offers seconds of pathos.



The Hulkster really is taking some serious punishment from the Bulldog

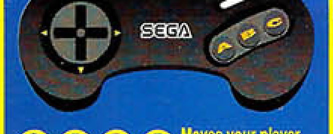
MAKING THE RIGHT MOVE

On the surface, it would appear that there are lots of different moves you can use. There are standard ones, like punches, kicks or clotheslines, and then there's a special move which is unique to each wrestler. For example, Hulk can perform a special Leg Drop move, while Papa Shango can do a Shoulder Breaker. This does add a bit of variety to the proceedings, particularly when you time your special move well. The actual graphics are slick, the animation's great and the sampled sounds are smart. So on the surface everything looks rather peachy.

Great sprites and very slick animation

The actual gameplay takes a little while to master. It's one of those games in which simply hitting the buttons as rapidly as possible isn't going to do the trick. To land a punch or connect with a special move, you've got to time it just right. With the standard moves, you usually have to hit the other wrestler three times on the go to make him fall over. Should you manage to deck him, you can either kick him, jump on

GET A GRIP!



↑ ↓ ← → Moves your player around the ring

Ⓐ Locks you up with your opponent and you can then use buttons B and C

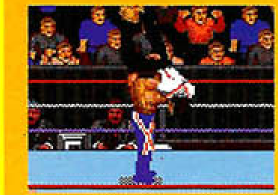
Ⓑ Punches, or used with button C runs across the ring. Also kicks

Ⓒ Kicks, or used with button B runs across the ring. Also performs a clothesline

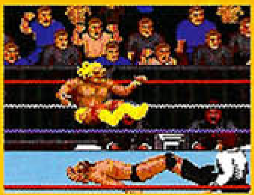
NB. Combinations of these buttons perform other specialised moves

HOW DID YOU DO THAT?

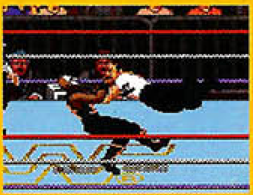
Pressing buttons A and C at the right time and in the right place makes



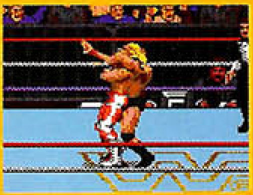
The British Bulldog's Power Slam is very effective, but tricky to use



Hulk Hogan's Leg Drop is a legend. Oh, and it hurts as well. Ooof!



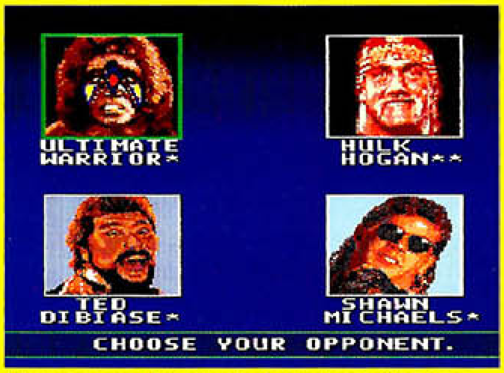
The IRS Write-Off. Don't worry if you don't get the joke. It's American



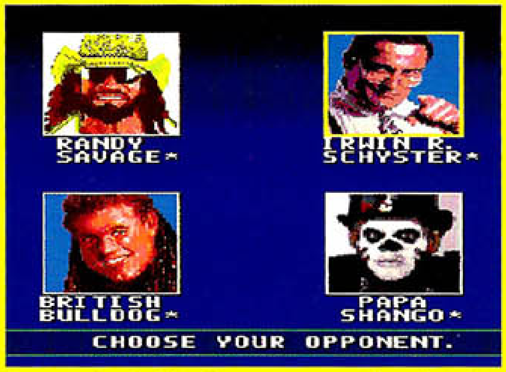
The Million Dollar Dream is very powerful, but it takes time to perfect

THE HARD MEN...

You've got eight wrestlers to choose from and they're nicely balanced between four "good-guys" and four "bad-guys". Take your pick...



When someone has already been chosen, their box turns green, so you'll have to choose someone else



You can also decide who your opponent is going to be. Very friendly this game, isn't it?

STLE MANIA

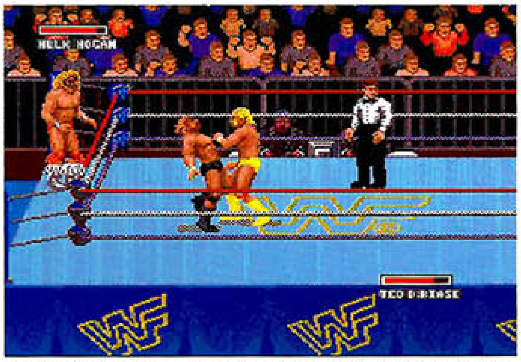
him or pin him. Pin him for a count of three and you've won.

TWO WRESTLERS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

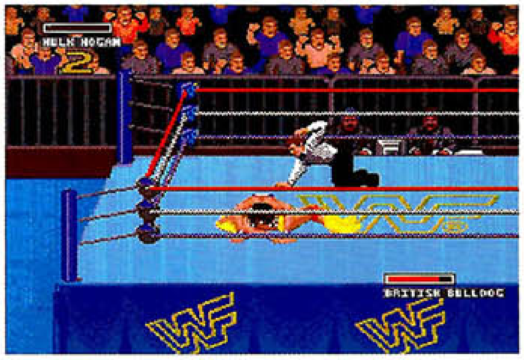
The most sophisticated area of the game involves the tag team. With this option you can control two wrestlers (one at a time) tagging them in and out when it looks like they're in trouble. Unfortunately, you can't get up to all that devious two-onto-one business which all the American tag teams seem to involve themselves in.

I suspect that this is one of those games you'd slap into your Mega Drive after an evening at the pub with your mates. So long as you play against someone else, it holds some long-term interest, mainly in the giggle department. It is quite fun to keep continually head-butting your opponent or scuppering their jog across the ring with a snappy clothesline. However, if you're a solitary console player (and if you are, you should get out more), then playing against the console alone just won't offer enough long-term interest.

® *Neil West*

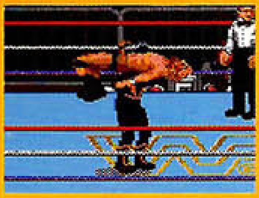


It's tag team time, but Hulk is having no problems with the Million Dollar Man. Ultimate Warrior is waiting in the wings though, just in case

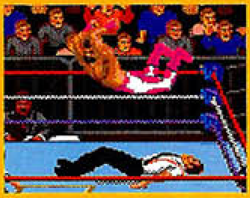


Hulk Hogan is down to no power, and the Bulldog has the pin in position. However, because he hasn't got any energy left, Hulk is a gonna

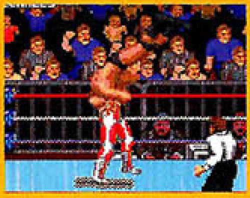
your wrestler perform his special move. Here are the specialised moves for each of the individual fighters. Have fun...



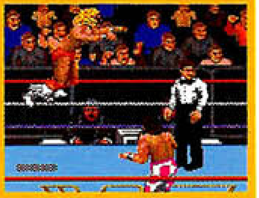
Papa Shango's Shoulder Breaker is deadly, and it hurts a bit as well



Climb up to the top rope and fly down with Randy Savage's Elbow Drop



The Shawn Michaels Suplex is very smooth. It hurts like hell too



Ultimate Warrior's flying Clothesline is powerful, but very tough to get right

WWF
SUPER WRESTLEMANIA

PUBLISHER: Flying Edge (IMPORT)
PRICE: £35 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)
RELEASE: Out now
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541053

One or two players. The two-player option's definitely the best

Three skill levels – hard really is hard

No-one dies, but get pinned down for a count of three and you're out

No battery back-up and no passwords

Four different events and eight wrestlers to choose from

GRAPHICS 8
●●●●●●●●○○

SOUND 7
●●●●●●●○○○

GAMEPLAY 6
●●●●●●○○○○

GAME SIZE 4
●●●●○○○○○○

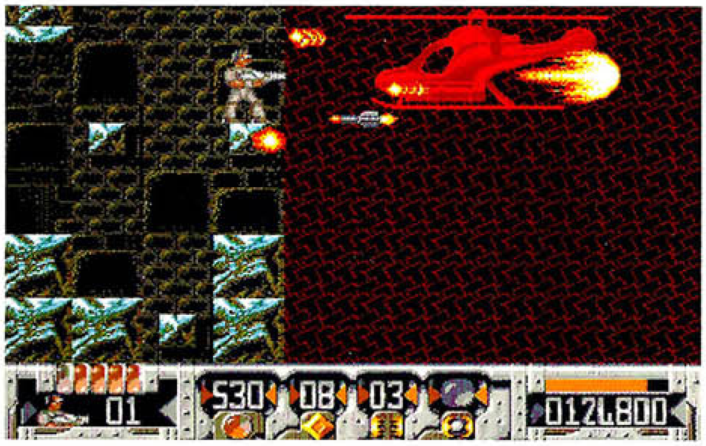
ADDICTION 6
●●●●●●○○○○

> **"In two-player mode it's quite a giggle. Avoid it, however, if you're a solitary Mega Driver"**

71
PERCENT

UNIVERSAL

OK, scene two, act one, lights, camera, actio... hold on, where the bloody hell have Dolph and Jean Claude gone? Andy Dyer takes a look at this film licence and tries to solve the mystery of the disappearing plot and characters. All is not quite right...



The guardians aren't too exciting in *Universal Soldier*. On this level you simply have to shoot down three of these particularly weedy helicopters

If you'd been reading MEGA regularly, you'd have read about *Universal Soldier* before. You'd also have heard us whingeing on about it being a graphically adjusted version of a game called *Turrican 2*. That's probably because that's what it is. It doesn't just bear a passing resemblance to *Turrican 2*, it is *Turrican 2*.

Now, while we feel that slapping on a big licence name in order to sell a game that's already lying around is a bit of a con, there were an awful lot of people who simply adored *Turrican 2*. What we'll do then is review this game on two different levels: firstly, as a film licence and secondly, (and probably more importantly) as a Mega Drive version of *Turrican 2*.

> **As a film licence *Universal Soldier* is crap with a capital CRAP**

LOUSY FILM LICENCE

As a film licence this is crap with a capital CRAP. The graphics have been altered to look vaguely Dolph Lundgrenish with bits of the scenery looking fairly down to earth, while later levels remain exactly as they were in *Turrican 2*. Also, you get a digitised piccy of the film characters at the start of the game, and a picture of Jean Claude Van Damme's character's house when you finish it. That's it, nothing else whatsoever suggests that this is anything to do with the film. Naughty, naughty Ballistic, don't deceive your public, tch, tch, slapped wrists, don't do it again.

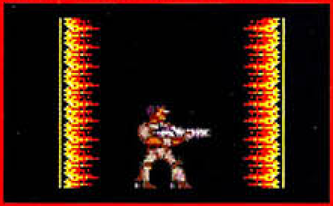
ONE FOR THE *TURRICAN 2* FANS

As a Mega Drive port over of *Turrican 2*, however, it works out just fine. I must admit that I've never been a fan of *Turrican 2* and let me tell you why not. For a start, the attack patterns of the enemies, while probably not actually being so, appear to be almost random. Most of the creatures simply home in on you in their hundreds, and do untold damage unless you can actually blast them first. There's very little opportunity to play through, come to grief, then learn by your mistakes. It's more a case of "Ah ha, right, here goes, dagga, dagga, dagg... oh. Bugger, that didn't happen last time".

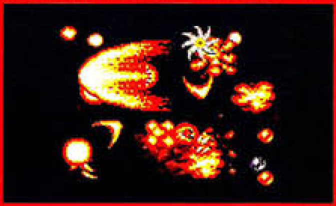
Another frustrating thing about the game is the size of the levels. Now normally I'd complain if levels weren't big enough, but this time they're too big. Mmm... let me make that a bit clearer. If you had levels this big with a whole string of challenges, battles and puzzles placed ingeniously throughout, things would be just fine. The

BAKER'S DOZEN (ERM, MINUS FIVE, UM... OH DEAR)

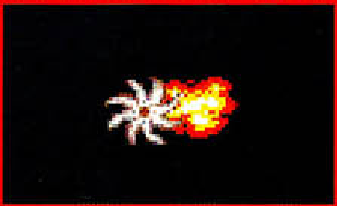
Universal Soldier (the bloke in the game, not the film) has a remarkable array of weapons at his disposal. In fact, it's spooky really, I used to know this bloke, Terry Can I think his name was, and he had exactly the same collection of weaponry at his disposal. Curious coincidence? Or blatant "we've got a film licence and we're gonna use it" rip-off? You decide for yourselves...



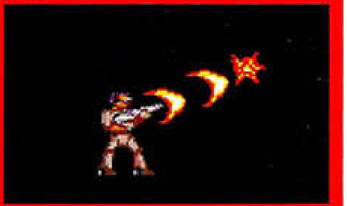
This weapon sends two sheets of flame right across the screen



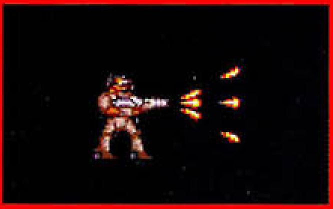
This mega weapon sends stuff everywhere. Don't try it at home



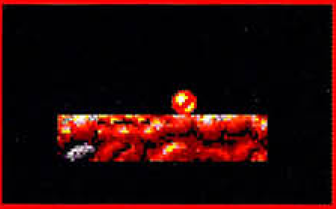
Turn into a spiky ball and you can cut a swathe through the enemy



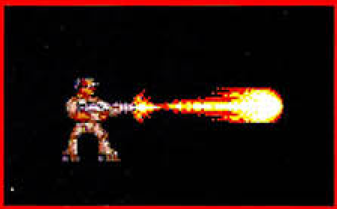
This flame-thrower can be fired through 360 degrees. Gracious!



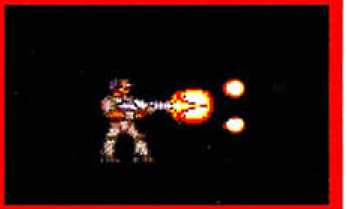
A mundane little weapon this. It simply fires a three-way spray



This is a ball, but fortunately it also serves as a highly explosive device

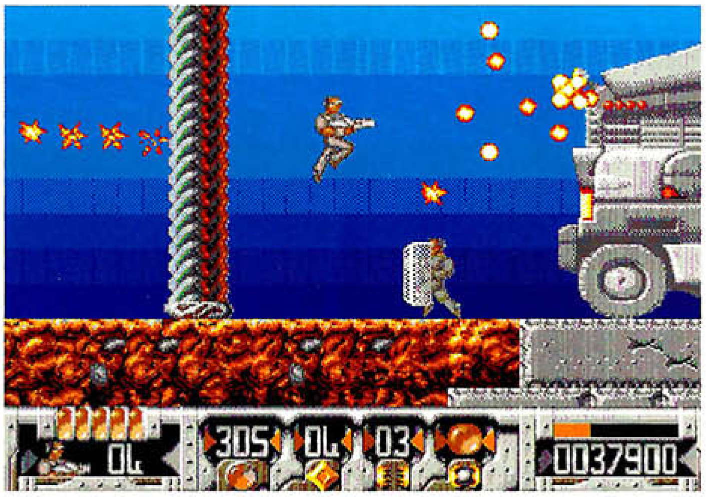


This weapon hurls fiery, erm, arrows at the enemy. Um, that's it



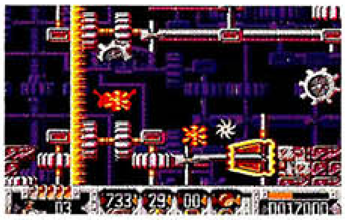
This one sends a number of little fire spheres hurtling around

SOLDIER



Another guardian who's a doddle to destroy. Leap over the riot policeman at the bottom and just keep firing. Eventually the vehicle thing will explode

I'm forever blowing up bubbles. (Sorry, it's the best I could do)



In case you're wondering, your character is that spiky ball-thing

trouble with *Turric...* oops sorry, *Universal Soldier*, is that these huge complex labyrinths of tunnels and caves are yours for the exploring.

You're completely free to trog wherever you like while constantly meeting up with those random assailants I was on about. It all gets a bit repetitive and tedious after a while though. There's no real sense of getting any nearer to your goal or achieving a little more each time you play – you simply scoot around aimlessly until you eventually happen upon a guardian or the exit.

But having said all that, there are a few nice touches in here. There are loads of power-ups to collect, and there are also a few neat sections in there, like the wind shaft, which is full of very spread out platforms. You start at the bottom, but to progress up through the shaft, you have to wait until there's an updraft (you can tell when this is happening, because a load of leaves blow up through the shaft to signal that a brief updraft has started).

As I said, it's all a bit too random and sprawling for my personal tastes, but it must be said that if you like action in your games and are prepared to put up with the high frustration level and the lack of need to use any thought processes whatsoever, you may become one of those strange people who actually end up loving the game. If you liked the movie, don't touch this with a large smelly stick, but *Turrican 2* buffs will find that this is as good a version as any.

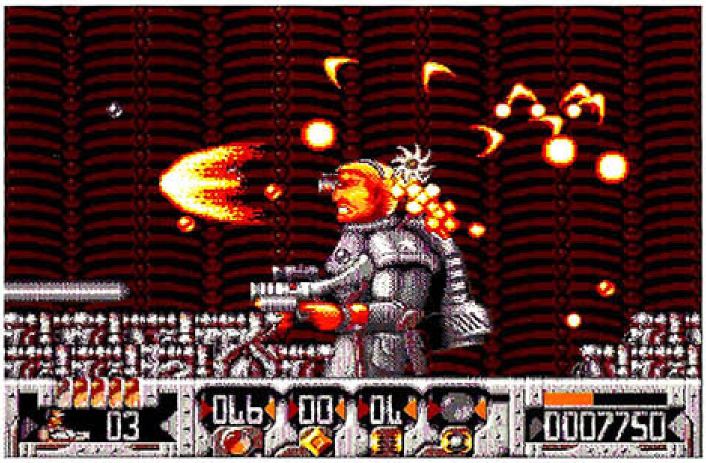
® *Andy Dyer*

... don't touch this with a large smelly stick

Our hero sends a lick of flame in an arc towards his foes... and misses

GET A GRIP!

- ⏪ ⏩ Moves your character left and right around the screen
- ⏫ ⏬ Makes your character jump and crouch
- Ⓐ Fires the majority of your weapons
- Ⓑ Also makes you jump
- Ⓒ Fires the wall-of-death weapon



This is the very final guardian. He looks a bit vile, but if you use your mega weapon, his laser won't harm you *and* he dies in a remarkably short time

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER
COPYRIGHT (C) 1992, CAROLCO

PUBLISHER: Ballistic

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Ballistic 081 877 0880

Just the one player

Two levels of skill: easy and hard

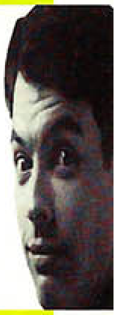
You've got four chances to do what a man's got to do

No battery back-up, but there is a password system

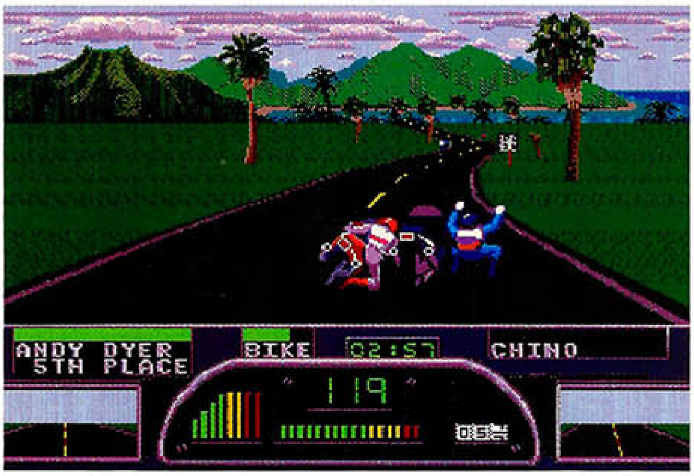
There are 11 stages

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	7
GAME SIZE	8
ADDICTION	6

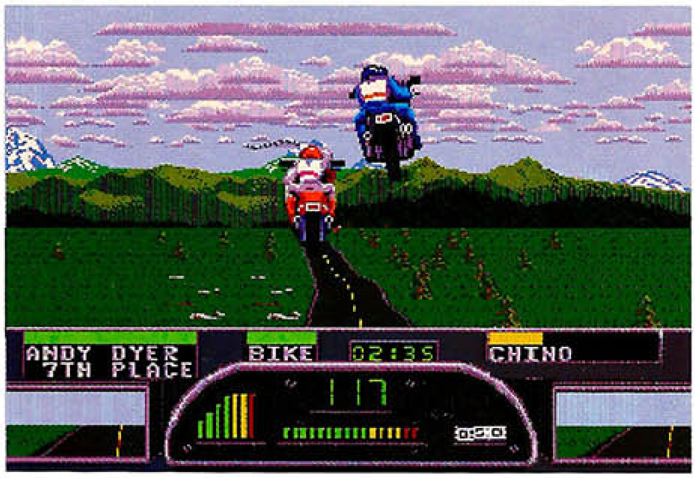
"Bog all to do with the film of the same name, but if you liked *Turrican 2*, this'll fit the bill nicely"



68 PERCENT



Much as it pained me to do it, I was forced to mercilessly hurl this fellow from his bike. Serves him right for being named after a pair of trousers



Oh God, Captain trousers is back. And this time we've taken to fighting in mid-air. Never mind, a swift punch will bring him back to earth with a thud

Andy Dyer's been driving around in a crappy old Vauxhall Chevette for years. So when he got his hands on this game, he started uncontrollably frothing at the mouth and gibbering like an idiot. Mmm... nothing changes

ROAD RASH 2

Having pulled on my leathers, I leapt astride my throbbing 50cc Honda Melody and sped off towards Glastonbury. The other riders didn't stand a chance. OK, I wasn't actually able to damage any of them (my flimsy fibreglass body work just wasn't up to the job), but when they saw me coming in full race leathers on such a pitiful little hair dryer, they collapsed into hysterical laughter and had to pull over.

Everything was going just fine until I ran into the back of a Mr Whippy ice cream van, and so went hurtling 50 yards down the road only to be festooned in Cornettos, 99 flakes and half a dozen Screwballs. So ended my first road rashing venture. Remember kids, don't try this at home.

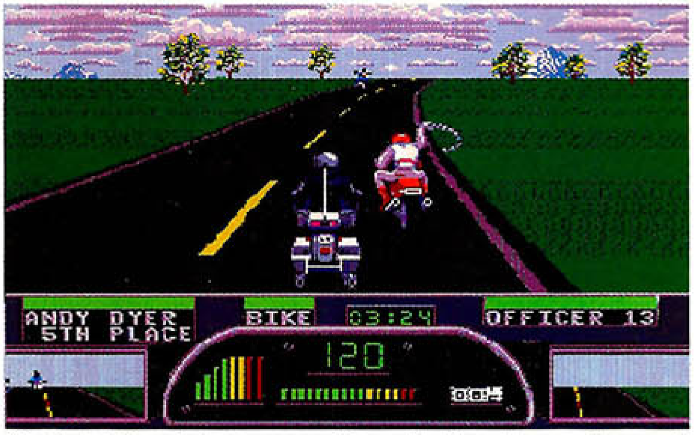
Tempting though it is, real life road rashing is strictly a no-no. That's why this game is so good. Instead of setting out to be a racing simulator, it's just a fairly simple arcade race game, with the added advantages of on-bike combat, police chases and simultaneous two-player action. The first thing to mention about this game is that if you liked *Road Rash, Road Rash 2* will be just what you've been waiting for. Those who haven't got the original should get this, because it'll blow your socks (and we dare say your riding boots) clean off.

It'll blow your socks clean off

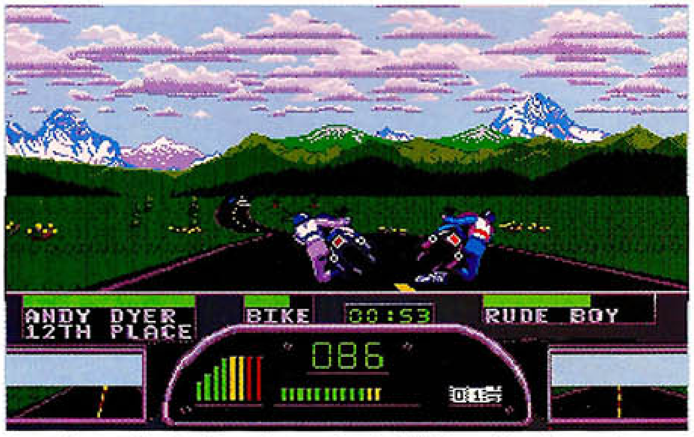
WHAT'S NEW?

So what has changed? The biggest difference (and the thing which makes this game even better than the last one) is the split-screen two-player option. There are two different options on the two-player game. You can either play the courses in the same way you would the one-player game, except now you'll also be racing one other human (or even helping each other), or you can play the straight head-to-head option (it's all-out war).

If the truth be known, the straight head-to-head option isn't as good as taking part in the real races. Having only one opponent can be a problem, in that if you crash once, there's very little chance of you catching up again before the end of the race. You may not think this is too major a problem, but if the crash happens at the start, it leaves you thinking, "Oh what's the bloody point?"



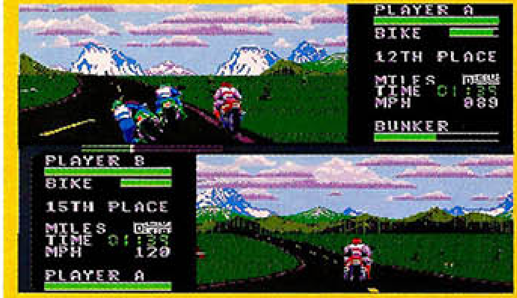
"No sir, I said 'may I please see your licence?' not 'may I have a close up of your length of industrial strength cha...' WAAARGH!" Poor old bobby



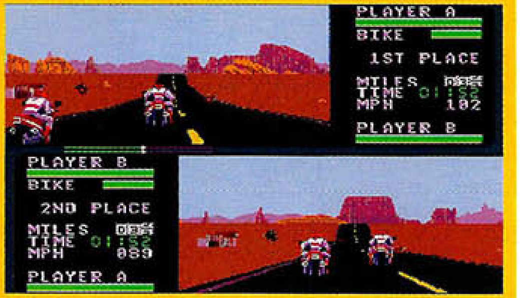
Formation cycling is all very impressive, but it'll be neither big nor clever when you both get stoved in by that oncoming car in the distance

TWO HEAD-TO-HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

In *Road Rash 2* you get not just one racing option, but three. You can play alone, you can play a split-screen game which pits you and a friend against the other riders, or you can play pure head-to-head (just you versus your mate). Let's take a look at those brilliant simultaneous split-screen options.



This is the best game option of all. You play against a friend, but the rest of the riders also take part



If things really get nasty though, play the Mano a Mano option. Just you and a friend (soon to be ex-friend)

No, the two-player option is much better – there's you, a mate, and squillions of other road rashers and road users to either get past or pummel. Start playing this option and the hours will fly by.

As for the one-player option, changes have been made here too. For a start, the tracks are different (but then they would have to be really, wouldn't they?). There are now more bikes to choose from. They are divided into three different classes, however, and you can only buy them if you've accumulated enough money. What's more, you can really feel the different handling capabilities of each bike. This is also where the only bit of thought required in the game comes into play.

> **There are now more bikes to choose from**

ANDY DYER
15TH PLACE
BIKE
LESLEY
008

Hmm... this will become a very familiar sight as you play *Road Rash 2*

CUNNING TACTICS

The three bike classes are Ultra Light, Nitro Class and Super Bike. Saving up just enough cash to buy the next model up in the Ultra Light class won't really do you much good. You'd do far better to ride like the devil, and save up enough dosh to make a purchase from the Nitro Class shop. Beyond this, you'll have to work things out as you go along.

The game as a whole is quite a bit tougher than the original. The opponents fight back viciously on later levels, and there are more policemen and more hazards to avoid. The first level, which consists of five stages, is fairly easy to get through, but as soon as you enter level two, things start to get really hairy.

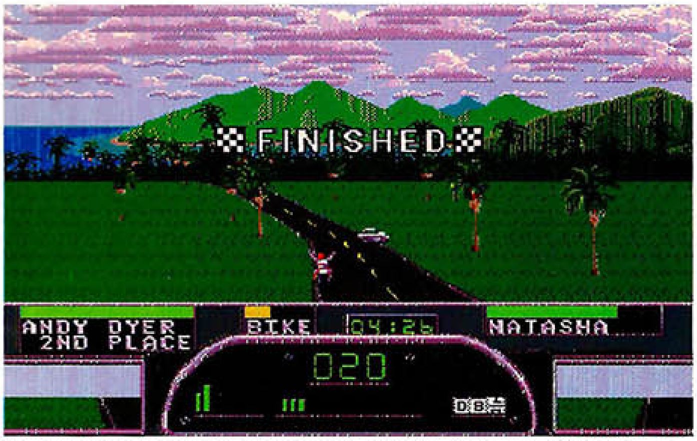
Whereas in *Road Rash* you could only steal clubs from the other riders, there's now a length of chain you can obtain. This is dead (or should that be dead*ly*) useful, as you don't have to be as near to the other riders as you do with the club. You can also spin the chain above your head for added effect.

ANDY DYER
15TH PLACE
BIKE
LESLEY
005

All in all, ramming the back of a car is generally regarded as stupid

All in all, these changes add up to make *Road Rash 2* quite a good deal more fun than *Road Rash*. Admittedly, the sequel isn't a million miles from its predecessor, but even so, any *Road Rash* owners should seriously check out this game. If you don't own the original, you'd be downright stupid to let this one pass you by. This is one of the most adrenaline-pumping race games available on any games machine.

® *Andy Dyer*



When you finish a race, the view shrinks into the distance as if the camera were panning away from your rider – not much use, but pretty nevertheless

GET A GRIP!

⇧ ⇩ ⇦ ⇨ Selects options, steers your bike and selects special attacks

Ⓐ The brake. Don't ever use it. This thing is for wimps only

Ⓑ Throttle. Use this all the time. Zoom!

Ⓒ Attack. You'd do well to use this quite a lot as well

ROAD RASH II
COPYRIGHT 1992 ELECTRONIC ARTS

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: January '93

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA 0753 549442

One or two players can go for a good Rashing

SKILL! Not exactly levels of skill, but after completing each section, the gameplay gets that much harder

Infinite lives really. Keep playing until you get bored or qualify

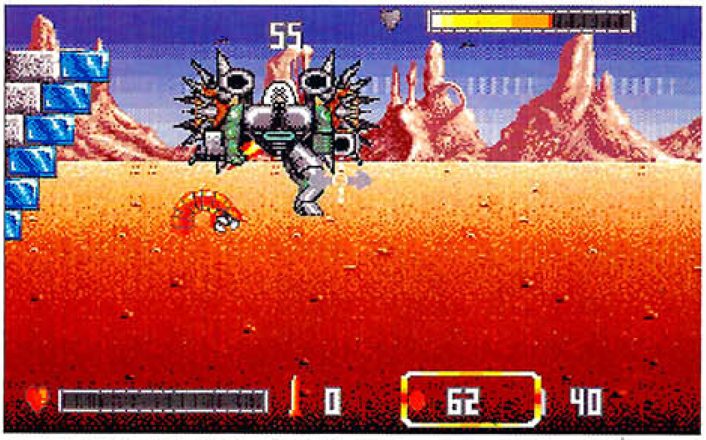
There's no battery back-up, but there is a password option

There are five stages (or courses) to each level

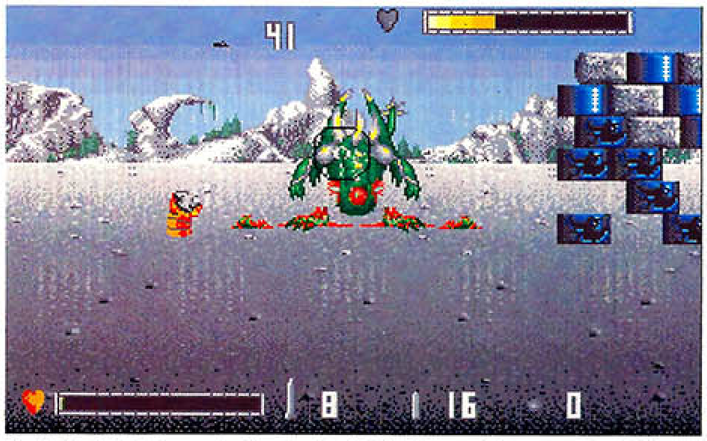
GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	9
GAME SIZE	8
ADDICTION	9

"At a push, I'd say that this is worth getting even if you have the original. If you don't already have *Road Rash*, then this is an absolute must. Love it"

91 PERCENT



All you have to do is aim for the limbs, and soon your enemies will be hopping mad. Sounds easy, but you need to be a sharp shooter for this one



Hasta la vista baby, and other such clichés. No need to worry about this guy now though, because he's totally 'armless. Ahem...

DEAT

Saving planets is all in a day's work for Paul Mellerick. (Cue: predictable gag number 102) He's got five now! Arf! (Oh god. Let's just get it over with...)

Tales of terror, doom, darkness and oblivion are ten to a penny when it comes to Mega Drive shoot-'em-ups. *Death Duel* is no exception, but let's forget the details. Suffice to say if you don't win, your planet and its people are stuffed.

In this game, however, instead of the intergalactic armies meeting in a far-flung solar system and shedding millions of lives, the powers that be have harked back to mediaeval times, when disputes were decided by a duel between knights from the opposing sides. And guess what? Climb inside the snappily named A-7 Trinity Rote Cyborg and you're the best chance of survival your planet has.

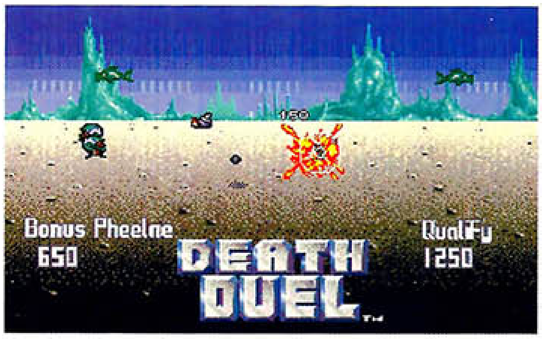
BUTCH BADDIES

Nine increasingly butch opponents present themselves to be slaughtered, but it's not long before you realise that it's not going to be easy to take these suckers apart.

Victory is more down to trial and error than calculated military genius

They're all pretty big, they can all take lots of hits, and they all give as good as they get. And what's more, you're up against a time limit as well. What starts off as a mind-numbing exercise in blatant blasting and rather uninteresting shoot-outs, soon becomes a battle of wits between you and the mechanoid monsters.

Luckily, it's not entirely a one-sided affair, and there's a rather handy shop just around the corner from the battlefield, which stocks more military hardware than any self-respecting hero could ever hope to use. There's cheap bulk-buy stuff such as the machine gun and missiles, which retail for around 1,000 and 3,000 Pheelae respectively. (Yes, Pheelae, is the absurd and imaginary currency that they use in this miserable corner of the galaxy.) But for the ultimate in alien-busting weaponry, you have to turn to the lob mine (10,000 Pheelae each) or the homin' rocket (15,000 each), which can demobilise an enemy with a single shot.



Here's a chance for some more cash on the bonus round. The smaller they come, the more money they're worth

WHICH WEAPON?

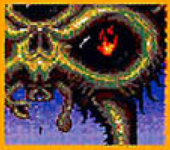
The range of weapons isn't just a nice touch to keep the Terminator wannabees happy. Oh no. All the aliens have different strengths and weaknesses, so you have to work out which weapons to use against each monster. It's quite a challenge to find the most effective way of destroying each mutated beast, and it takes several attempts before you strike upon the right combination of guns, grenades, rockets and missiles.

But even when you do win, there's always a niggling feeling that victory is more down to trial and error than your pre-calculated military genius. If you choose the wrong equipment to start with, you get the chance to go to the shop again before you start your last life, but most of the time you have to play through from the start to get to the monster that defeated you last time out. And when you get to him, you just have to trawl through the weapons until

THE MONSTER MASH

Here are your nine opponents, in all their motley glory. They are all big, they can all takes lots of hits, and they all give as good as they get.

Name:	**Shanox Moisait**
Age:	**529**
Race:	**The Krag**
Strength:	**83**
Agility:	**81**
Victories:	**12**

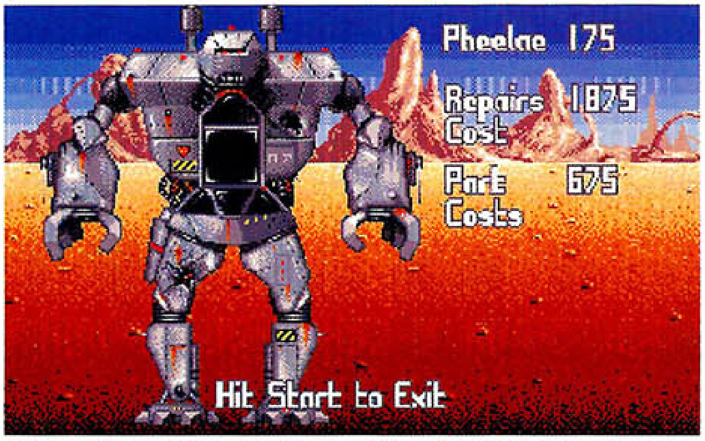


Name:	**Forsal Jeraba**
Age:	**655**
Race:	**The Lairdan**
Strength:	**48**
Agility:	**61**
Victories:	**26**

Name:	**Krax Xarkton**
Age:	**43**
Race:	**Xerian Ogre**
Strength:	**64**
Agility:	**47**
Victories:	**21**

Name:	**Darrius Morb**
Age:	**42**
Race:	**Sorallium Cyborg**
Strength:	**93**
Agility:	**97**
Victories:	**89**

Name:	**Barb Eubisbapcia**
Age:	**698**
Race:	**The Slata**
Strength:	**82**
Agility:	**71**
Victories:	**121**



Find a hole and then see if you've got enough cash to repair it. You'll have to be quick though, 'cos this armour's really starting to crack up

GET A GRIP!

⬆ ⬇ ⬅ ➡ Moves your cyborg left and right, and moves the targetter in eight directions

Ⓐ Fires left weapon

Ⓑ Fires centre weapon

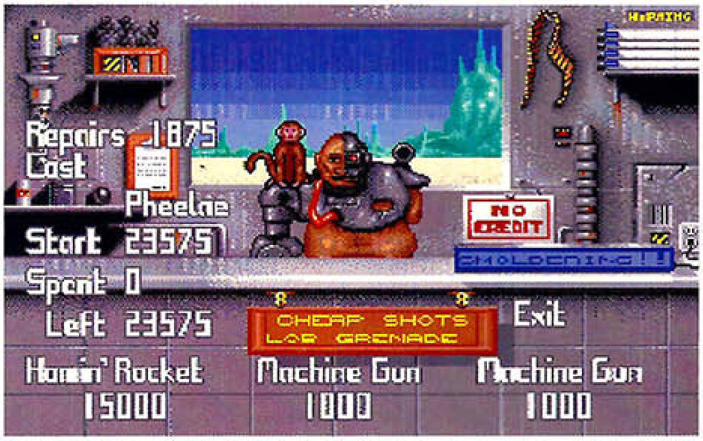
Ⓒ Fires right weapon

H DUEL

you find the right one for the job. You'll know when you've got the best combination, because invariably each battle is over in a matter of seconds.

The amount of money you have for new weapons depends on how quickly you can dispatch the enemy. The faster you do it, the more money you get to spend in the shop. There's also a bonus round in which you have to shoot at small creatures, which parade across the screen in front of your machine guns. Once again, the quicker you achieve a minimum score, the more money you get. And the more money you have, the better weapons you can buy.

At first you spend all your money at once on a random selection of weapons, but the best tactic is to buy the basic minimum hardware to dispose of the early beasts, and save up for some really juicy equipment for the mongrels who come later. Usually this means you end up buying a couple of homing missiles (the most powerful weapon) and very little else. There's also another drain on your reserves – the Cyborg suit isn't damageproof, you have to pay to get it repaired.



Make good use of those hard-earned Pheelae. The best way to do this is to buy a homin' rocket and then let your guns do the rest

TOUGH LUCK

Even though there are nine monsters to fight, there isn't enough variety, because most of them are so ridiculously hard to kill that you end up using homin' rockets and the more powerful grenades. And using a homin' rocket against one creature is exactly the same as using it against another. The game would have been much better if it relied more on skill than luck, but there's still plenty of gung-ho fun to be had.

Paul Mellerick

PUBLISHER: Razor Soft (IMPORT)

PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Telegames 0533 516861

It's you against the monsters

Yes, you'll need some to play this game

Play with two, three or five continues

No battery back-up and no passwords

Nine different monsters to defeat

GRAPHICS 8
●●●●●●●●○○

SOUND 6
●●●●●●○○○○

GAMEPLAY 4
●●●●○○○○○○

GAME SIZE 5
●●●●●○○○○○

ADDICTION 6
●●●●●●○○○○

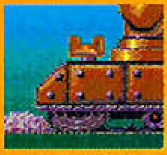
> **"An original game, which would have been ideal for the Menacer. As it is, it's a good laugh, but it could have been so much better"**

61 PERCENT

Take note of their strength, agility and victories, and whether they are mechanical or fleshy, because it all affects the weapons you choose.

Name: Karl Borgas
Age: 16
Race: Antxlian Cyborg
Strength: 82
Agility: 71
Victories: 121

Name: Kuros Tizark
Age: 38
Race: Ovinian Ogre
Strength: 81
Agility: 91
Victories: 118



Name: Yorgik Somtix
Age: 21
Race: Silenian Ogre
Strength: 68
Agility: 61
Victories: 76

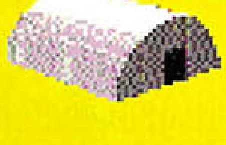
Name: Simnus Julius
Age: 48
Race: Treesian Cyborg
Strength: 100
Agility: 100
Victories: 99

It's all about helicopters this game, so Paul Mellerick comes up with a witty strapline about choppers and lubricants. Oh dear, we're out of sp...

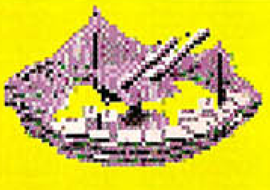
STEEL

WHAT'S THAT?

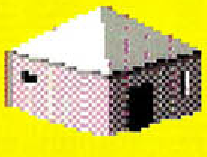
As you fly through the terrain, you'll come up against various objects that you have to destroy. These are varied and there are lots of them – here are some we found on the earlier levels. Check out what they do and how you can avoid them. It's all essential stuff to a budding pilot.



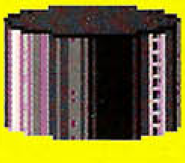
BUNKERS – Troops sleep in here, so they're not going to be any trouble. Just blow 'em up



GUN EMPLACEMENTS – These suckers fire rapidly, so fire at them and blow 'em up



HOUSES – Again, these hold troops, but they don't fire back at you. Just blow 'em up (again)



OIL – Everybody loves oil, don't they? Not in this game. Fire at the tankers and, er, blow 'em up

MISSILES – Try blowing these up before they launch

It seems that as soon as *F-22 Interceptor* came out (about a year ago), all the software companies realised that flight simulators were possible on our humble little machines and thereafter they became very popular. *LHX Attack Chopper* was reviewed in issue one of MEGA and *F-15 Strike Eagle* from Microprose and *F-29 Super Fulcrum* from Domark are both being programmed as you read this.

Meanwhile, *Steel Talons* is the latest flight sim to hit the market. It's a coin-op conversion, but having never played the game in the arcades, I can't tell you how the conversion compares. I can, however, tell you how this game rates in its own right.

> **Never have I had more trouble controlling a flight sim**

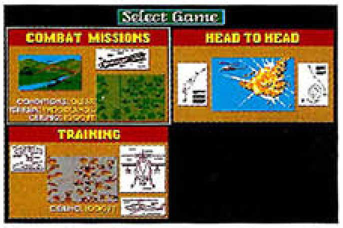
You will already have noticed from the screenshots that the 3D-view of the game is blocky and very similar to that of *Hard Drivin'*, which was also programmed by Tengen and was also an Atari coin-op. What a coincidence. I don't think.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE?

Steel Talons is a helicopter flight sim, which sets you the goal of completing 12 missions to become a member of the Steel Talons, the élite core of helicopter pilots.

Each of these 12 missions is set over different terrain (from fog and snow to mountains and deserts), which you must navigate through. It sounds easy enough, but you also have to destroy targets, and these vary from gun emplacements to tanks and even other helicopters. These aren't just useless decoys either, because they fire back at you.

As well as having all this scenery to fly around and all these targets to hit, you've got a time limit for each mission. If you can do the mission in under the required time, you get an ACE rating for that mission. If you're not that fast but still complete the mission, you'll get a pass that allows you to move on to the next mission, where things get tougher.



Here's your main menu screen. Select your game and then press Start to play *Steel Talons*

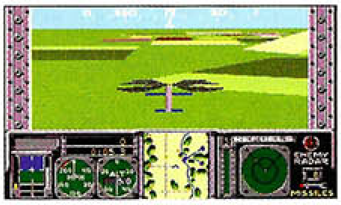
Your helicopter can take a few hits, but take too many and you'll come crashing to the ground. You also achieve this end by flying into mountains, so avoiding this situation is advisable. If you lose a life (no matter how you do it), you continue from the position where you were destroyed, so you don't have to go through the whole mission again. You have got only three lives, however, so don't think you can just throw them away.

To help you complete your missions, your helicopter is armoured to the hilt with homing missiles (just enough to get you through each mission) and a 30 mm chain cannon, that has unlimited ammunition. You've got the helicopter, you've got the ammo, but have you got the talent?

HAVE YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES?

You view straight ahead into the action, but by pressing Start and button C you can zoom in and out of the cockpit. By far the best view, however, is the one which allows you to see the whole of the helicopter. If you do decide to view from the cockpit, you're looking for some serious trouble, because you can't really see what's coming up and when.

Once you've got used to the 3D view, you should really take some time out to look at the info panel along the bottom of the screen. This shows all the information you'll need and the most important bit of information is the map. This map shows your flying area and where all the targets are (denoted by a yellow flash). Your position is shown by a white chevron, which also points in the direction in which you're flying.



You're at the start of the mission and all your targets are ready and waiting to be blown up. Push that joystick forward and go for it

GET A GRIP!

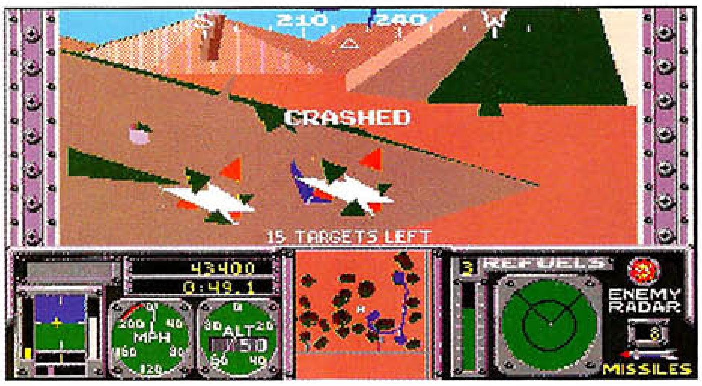
◀ ▶ Turn left or right. Use with button C to control the rudder

▲ ▼ Use with button C to alter your altitude up or down

Ⓐ Fires your missiles. Use only when you've locked onto something

Ⓑ Fires your chain cannon. Again, wait until you've locked on before you use it

Ⓒ Use with the D-pad to turn and to change altitude



I suppose this is the *Steel Talons'* alternative for a Double Whammy. You took out the other helicopter, but you blew up as well. Start again

WHERE IT'S AT

The cockpit of a helicopter may be very complex and all that, but in *Steel Talons* everything is made a lot simpler. Check this log out, and you should have no trouble getting to grips with things.

Missile counter: Keep an eye on how many missiles you've got, and don't waste them

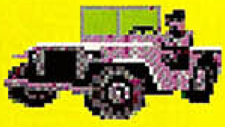
The enemy radar: It'll show you if anything is coming up behind you

The map: If it's highlighted in yellow, then find it and destroy it

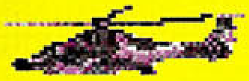
Your score and time: Vital to your mission success

The altimeter/airspeed indicators: Don't fly too high or too fast as you might *not* live to regret it

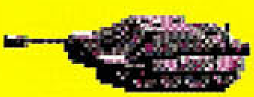
TALONS



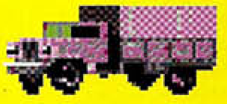
JEEPS – These may look harmless enough, but there is, in fact, a guy in the back firing at you with a machine gun. Fire at them from a distance and (ahem) blow 'em up



HELICOPTERS – Make sure they're in your range and then, er, blow 'em up. (Look this is getting silly, you're just flying around and blowing everything up – Neil)



TANKS – (Well that is the general idea of the game you know. I mean, take a look at these tanks, what are you supposed to do with them apart from blow 'em up? – Paul)



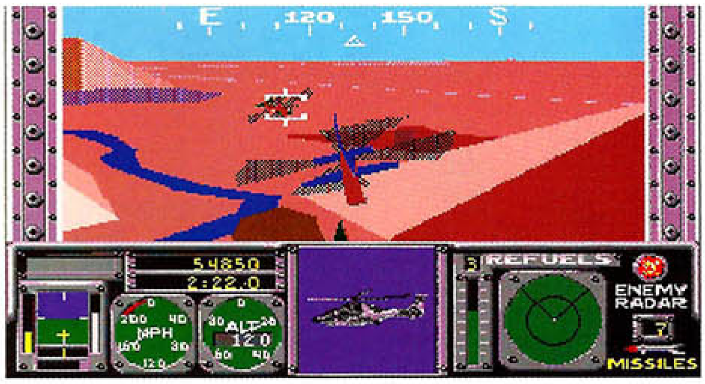
TRUCKS – (I don't care, think of something else to say or you're fired – Neil) (Oh, all right then – Paul). See that truck? Well fly towards it and then blow it up. (Ha – Paul)

The two gauges next to the map (the airspeed and the altimeter) are also important and need to be watched. Your score and time are also shown, along with how many missiles you have left, a target radar, how many lives you have, a bank indicator and an enemy radar warning device. It may all sound very complicated, but it's all nicely laid out and easy to use.

IT'S ALL IN THE WAY YOU HANDLE IT

It's a shame then that the joypad control is so appalling. Never in all my gamesplaying days have I had more problems controlling a flight sim than in this game. It's absolutely awful. The 3D view is very jerky and even turning your helicopter around can be very disorientating. But you've got a map to help, right? Well the map is about as much good as a driving licence is to a fish. It is square and small, but your play area is massive. If you fly off one end, you then (mysteriously) appear at the other side, and the map is hopelessly out of scale. You can't get an idea of where to go or how far it is, and as such you get terribly confused.

You also have great trouble getting your altitude right. You can move up and down easily enough, but getting the thing to stop at any one height is almost impossible. This in itself wouldn't be that bad, but because you can get attacked by things at different altitudes it is an annoying fault.



You've got him in your sights and you've still got seven missiles left. Let one fly, and then watch the fun as he gets blown into a zillion little pieces

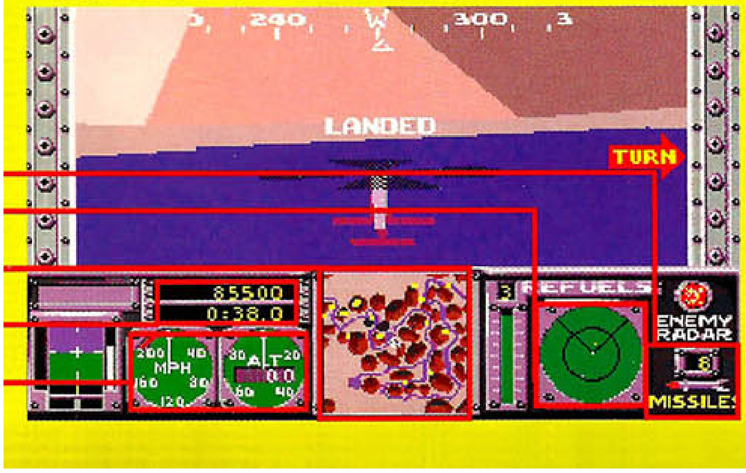
ANYONE FOR A HEAD-TO-HEAD?

After the frustration of the normal game let's move onto the head-to-head option. Well, it does say two players on the back of the box. Well, there's another disappointment – the two-player mode is a con. You don't get two games, or a split screen, but you do both get to control the same helicopter... yes, exactly. One of you flies while the other controls the gun. Well, at least both of you can get annoyed at the same time, instead of waiting for your turn.

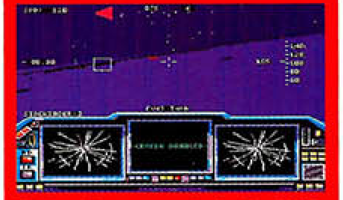
Steel Talons could have been an exciting alternative to *LHX Attack Chopper*, because so many of the elements in the game are very different. All it ends up being, however, is a very poor helicopter sim. If helicopters are your thing, try *LHX Attack Chopper* instead.

® *Paul Mellerick*

IN THE COCKPIT...



THEN AGAIN...



Better chopper control with *LHX*

LHX Attack Chopper (reviewed in issue one of MEGA, 88%) is the only other helicopter flight sim on the Mega Drive. The pace is slower than in *Steel Talons*, but it's a better game all round.

PUBLISHER: Tengen (IMPORT)
PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)
RELEASE: Out now
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541293

Play on your own or get a mate to be your co-pilot

There are normal and hard levels of skill

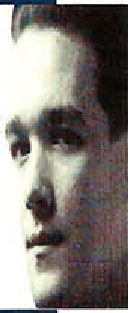
You've got three lives

No battery back-up and no passwords

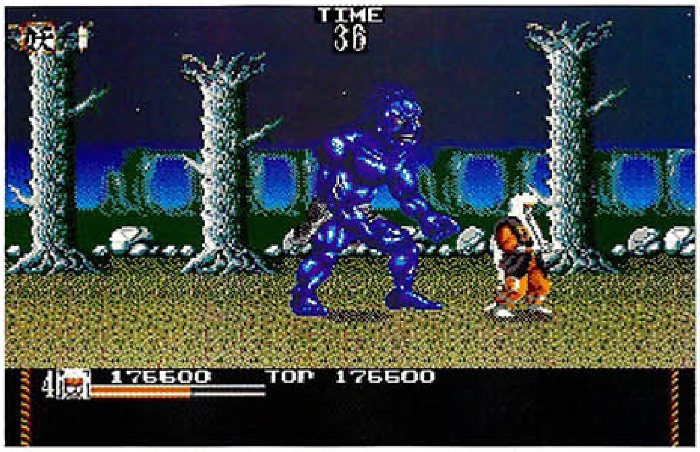
12 missions and a head-to-head game

GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	5
GAMEPLAY	6
GAME SIZE	7
ADDICTION	4

> **"The stills may look nice, but the movement is crap and the control is awful"**



55 PERCENT



This guy may look a bit on the big side, but several punches to the er, ahem, lower regions should see him well and truly off

GET A GRIP!

⇦ ⇨ ⇧ ⇩ Moves your fighter around the screen, but don't expect much change in the scenery

Ⓐ Your attack button: punches or kicks depending on your position

Ⓑ Your jump button: use with button A for attacking jumps

Ⓒ Collects magic scrolls, which should be saved for your struggle (huh, you'll be lucky) against the end-of-level baddy

Paul Mellerick's suddenly gone right off swords, samurai and sushi. Read on...

MYSTICAL FIGHTER

Sometimes a game is released which may be similar to loads of other games on the market, but you fall in love with it and it becomes a much used cart in your collection. One such game is *Streets of Rage 2* (reviewed on page 38). One game which certainly can't be put into this category is *Mystical Fighter*, a below average beat-'em-up game, which, quite honestly, should really never have been made.

EVIL LORD WHATSHISFACE

The plot is decidedly simple: find the Evil Lord Kabuki (you know, that fella who appears in scores of guises in just as many games) and destroy him.

Mystical Fighter does have more to it, in fact on the surface the game has all that should be necessary to make a decent beat-'em-up, but it's all put together so badly that it ends up being a right royal mess.

You control your fighter as the screen scrolls from left to right and then you deal with any of the bad guys who come on screen. Each enemy has a power bar, and when that bar runs out they're dead. When you've killed one bad guy, the screen scrolls on a bit and you kill some more. Keep going, and you'll come up against the big end-of-level boss. Defeat him, and you move on to the next level, where you start the whole process all over again. The backdrops are different, but who cares.

> **Just the same sad old story**

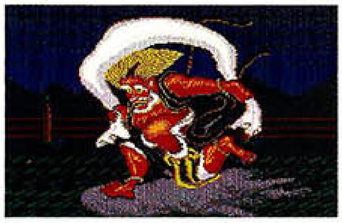
SEEN IT ALL BEFORE

This is the same beat-'em-up formula that's been used before, except here it's all so bland. As you progress, the graphics for each level don't alter, and you are reminded of old films in which the background scenery is the same throughout. The same applies for the characters – the only difference between them from one level to the next being their colour.

The gameplay is fun, however, and your fighter does have the ability to make quite a few good moves, but the strength of the opposition isn't such that you'll need to use all of them. Simply by combining punches, kicks and the odd jump, you can sail through all the levels – some folk would even say that it's possible to complete the game on your second go. You can choose the number of lives you want and whether you want any continues. The game does incorporate a simultaneous two-player option, but even that's standard these days.

If you're after a classy beat-'em-up, then it's got to be *Streets of Rage 2*, or even *Streets of Rage*, because *Mystical Fighter* just simply isn't in the same league.

Ⓜ Paul Mellerick

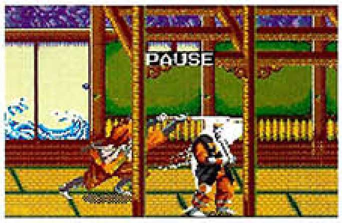


Your most powerful magic – old man skipping with large white sheet

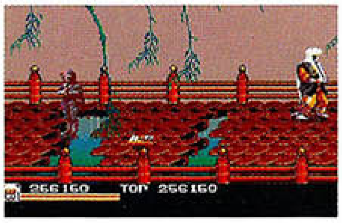
THEN AGAIN

***Streets of Rage 2* – a far better buy**

Streets of Rage 2 (reviewed on page 38 of this issue of MEGA) outshines *Mystical Fighter* in every department – graphics, sound and game play addiction. It's also miles bigger. What more can I say? Except, get it.



These swordsmen are a bit tough – a flying attack jump is best



Don't just stand in the corner, go and attack that ninja

MYSTICAL FIGHTER

PUBLISHER: Dream Works (IMPORT)

PRICE: £35 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541593

Play with a mate, 'cos you'll get bored by yourself

SKILL! Normal or hard – You can only finish the game properly on hard

Up to five lives. Choose from the options menu

No passwords or battery back-up – the game's not big enough

Five straightforward levels

GRAPHICS	●●●●●●●○○○	7
SOUND	●●●●●●○○○○	6
GAMEPLAY	●●●●○○○○○○	4
GAME SIZE	●●●●○○○○○○	4
ADDICTION	●●●●●○○○○○	5

"It's alright, but it's just too simplistic. When you can buy *Streets of Rage 2*, why even think about getting this?"

58 PERCENT

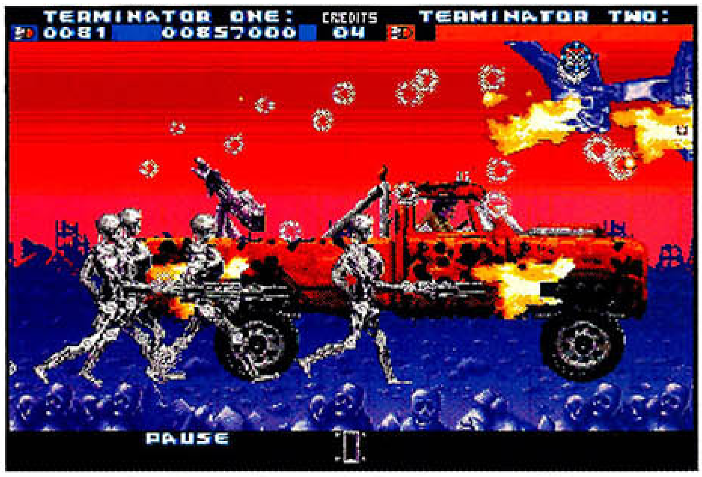
TERMINATOR 2 THE ARCADE GAME

The coin-op is a classic, and Neil West considers this game to be an excellent and challenging conversion

It's almost impossible to walk into an arcade these days without being confronted by a whole rack of *Terminator 2* machines (alongside all the *Streetfighter 2s*, of course).

The wildly successful *Terminator 2* coin-op took a very old game style (the *Operation Wolf*-type duck shoot), and beefed it up for the Nineties with some very spanky (and slightly worrying, really – we're getting to the stage now where graphics are extremely close to real life in games like this, and I'm not totally sure that we want to be encouraging people to go around mindlessly slaughtering such realistic images) digitised graphics and all that kind of palaver.

After a load of licences which turned the *Terminator* saga into various dull little beat-'em-ups and platform games, Arena have finally released the game everyone wanted to see in the first place. But a coin-op costs thousands of pounds – is the humble Mega Drive really up to the job? In a word, yes.



Probably the last thing you'll ever see in *Terminator 2* – a million cyborgs and lots of big jets all try to blow up your little pick-up truck at once

A RIGHT GOOD CONVERSION

The old Mega Drive's really pulling out all the stops with this game, with some of the most impressive graphics yet seen outside a Mega CD game. Recognisable Terminators – John Connors and Arnies – glare out of the screen at you, and some enormous sprites lurch around the place in stunningly smooth fashion. It sounds pretty excellent too, with lots of rousing music and sampled sounds, although the noise of your gun firing is irritatingly akin to someone playing a washboard in a skiffle band.

Playability's probably the weakest part of the game, not that it's actually very weak at all, but the joypad response is a bit skittery in a game that's tough enough to demand some real precision control. Not surprisingly, the game plays well with Sega's new Menacer light gun (see page 18 of this issue of MEGA before you rush out and buy one).

> **The Mega Drive pulls out all the stops here**

CRUELLY CHALLENGING

The game is extremely entertaining, and (as with the original coin-op), even more fun if you get a chum along to join in at the same time. Indeed, if you don't, you can pretty much forget about seeing the end without some fairly major practice – after a couple of not-exactly-easy but reasonable first levels, you get to the third stage, where you have to protect a truck carrying John Connor from a massed attack of Terminators, backed up by a squadron of bombers, who come in from nowhere at a height of about twenty feet. This is phenomenally mean, which isn't really such a bad thing – in a game in which the concept is essentially simplistic, serious challenge is the only way you're going to get enough playing time to get value for your money, and serious challenge is certainly what you get here.

OK, so the game may not have a great deal of depth and if the actual idea of blasting Terminators apart appeals to you at all you should probably see a psychiatrist, but the challenge is certainly there and the execution of it won't leave you disappointed.

Neil West

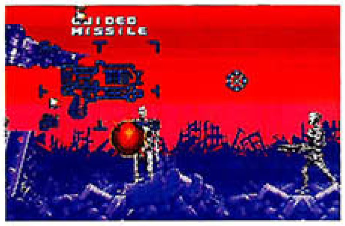
GET A GRIP!

← → ↑ ↓ Moves your gunsight around

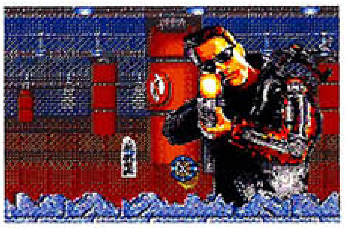
Ⓐ Fires the gun which will blow away those Terminators

Ⓑ Fires the missiles which will make you a hero

Ⓒ This button does nowt, chief



Shoot the little icons which appear at the bottom of the screen, and you get great power-ups like this one



Yikes! It's a Terminator! Better blast half of his face away to reveal his true robot-ness, then kill him

T2 THE ARCADE GAME

PUBLISHER: Arena

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: December '92

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Arena 0962 877788

One or two people can play this game

There's only the one level of skill

You've got only one life, with energy and variable continues

No passwords and no battery back-up

There are eight levels

GRAPHICS 9
●●●●●●●●●●

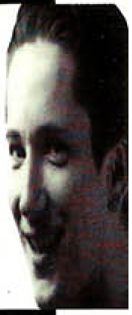
SOUND 8
●●●●●●●●●●

GAMEPLAY 6
●●●●●●●●●●

GAME SIZE 7
●●●●●●●●●●

ADDICTION 8
●●●●●●●●●●

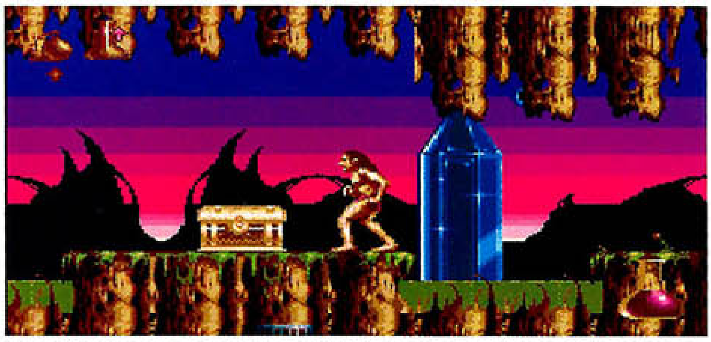
> **"A great conversion of the coin-op, and an excellent example of the *Operation Wolf* genre"**



82 PERCENT

SHADOW OF THE BEAST 2

The Beast Lord may be history, but his followers are out for revenge. It's time, therefore, for Andy Dyer to give his ball and chain a quick polish and plough into some heavy-duty action


Speedy jumps are essential here. Otherwise you may find that this gigantic crystal will become very good friends with your lower intestine. Yuk!

Having defeated the Beast Lord in the first game, our hero got all complacent and thought "That's him stuffed then". He hadn't, however, taken the loyalty of the Beast Lord's demonic hordes into account. They were all a bit naffed off about the death of their leader, so they're out to get him. So starts another orgy of parallax scrolling, enormous monsters and colourful locations. But has the deficit of gameplay in the first game been remedied for the sequel? Not entirely…

In fact, not at all really. True there are a fair few puzzles to solve, but they're not exactly exciting or mind-bendingly complex. They're difficult to work out, but that's because they're a bit obscure rather than ingeniously designed. And as far as the enemies are concerned, they're still as unavoidable (not to mention rather annoying) as ever.

SLICK, BUT NOT THAT SLICK

On the whole, the visuals are impeccable. The main sprites move well, and the backgrounds are gorgeous. It must be said, however, that some of the sprites are really rather bad, and because of the very high standard of the quality stuff, the poorer efforts stand out like sore thumbs.

Good-looking, but tough to get into

So you may be thinking then that this is a load of old rubbish. Not at all. Once you have waded through the earlier, annoying parts of the game, your interest should just about be aroused enough to make you want to carry on and, quite possibly, see it through to the end. I must admit that despite my swearing and cursing at the thing, I did end up wanting to try again. Fine sentiments from a reviewer who gets the game sent to him free I know, but to be honest, if you've just forked out forty quid on the game, you may be less inclined to forgive the annoyance factor.

When *Shadow Of The Beast* first came out on the Mega Drive, it caused a bit of a stir. No-one had ever done anything quite as exciting visually before, so the lack of gameplay was largely ignored. Now though, we've become immune to the immediate hit of a graphical masterpiece, so dishing up a fairly shallow game is a bit disappointing. To give Psygnosis credit, however, this game was written quite some time ago, so perhaps it's Electronic Art's decision to release it that is slightly questionable.

This is a great looking game, but the challenge contained within is decidedly average. The visuals would get 90%, the gameplay would get 50%. On that basis I'm going to hum and hah and then give it 70%.

® *Andy Dyer*

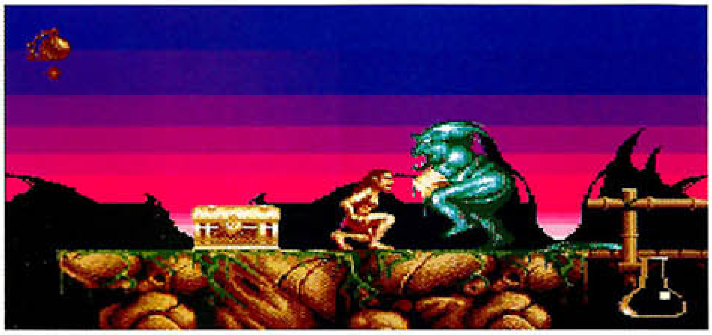
GET A GRIP!

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Enables you to crouch and walk

Ⓐ You can make the little geek jump with this button

Ⓑ Press this one, and your hero will attack with his enormous ball thing

Ⓒ This lets you select any items you may have collected along the way


Combat tips for heroes. Number one: When caught between a chest and a huge beast, attack the beast first, as chests tend to be less aggressive

BEAST II
Copyright 1992 Psygnosis.
Licensed by Sega Enterprises Ltd.

PUBLISHER: EA

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA 0753 549 552

Only one player in this game

There are three levels of skill

You have only one life, but you do have an energy meter

No battery back-up and no passwords

No stages as such. It's just one long drag from start to finish

GRAPHICS 8
●●●●●●●●○○

SOUND 7
●●●●●●●○○○

GAMEPLAY 7
●●●●●●●○○○

GAME SIZE 9
●●●●●●●●●○

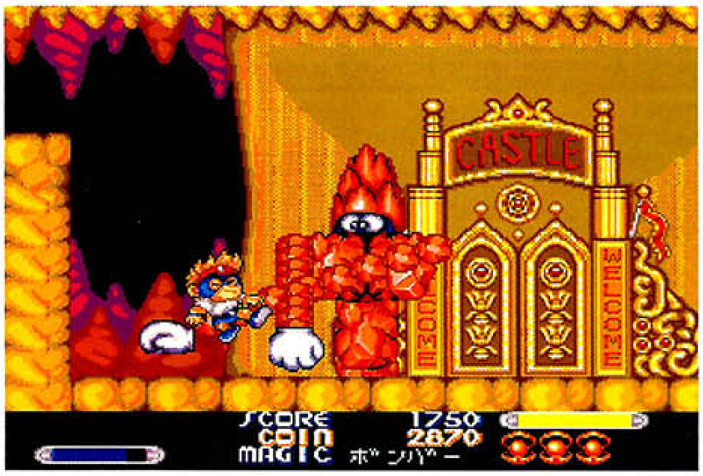
ADDICTION 6
●●●●●●○○○○

"Mildly entertaining, and it does draw you in eventually. But why is it so average when the graphics are so good?"

70 PERCENT

CHIKI CHIKI BOYS

Paul Mellerick despairs of yet another cutesy coin-op conversion



Urm, a good tip here might be to avoid the arms. What do you think?

Oh God, it's the same sad old story – arcade game conversion which is a complete con. Yes, *Chiki Chiki Boys,* the conversion of the the 1990 arcade game *Mega Twins* from Capcom, has come to the Mega Drive, and it is indeed a rather predictable affair. While it's all very nice and cute and all that, it is not unfortunately going to be the most original or thrilling game you've ever played.

I for one wish Capcom had left the game in the arcades. Don't get me wrong, *Chiki Chiki Boys* is a nice enough game, it's just that any challenge the actual coin-op may have possessed has been completely lost during its conversion.

A far cry from the coin-op

In essence, this game epitomises scores of other cutie, cutie games available on the Mega Drive.

The characters (all big eyed, oversized heads – you know the type) are on a quest. Seemingly, an evil lord is trying to take over their worlds, and these boys don't like it one bit. So with supplies of swords and sushi sandwiches, they set off to rid the world of another dark evil thingummybob.

The game has four worlds and the fourth one is the only one which has any substance. This world, which is split into five parts (all of which you have to travel through to reach the final battle), appears only when you've successfully completed the first three.

Before you can get anywhere in this game, however, you'll need some serious weaponry. Thankfully, the game gives you various opportunities to upgrade to some serious baddie-bashing firepower. When you slice an enemy with your sword it will disappear and leave behind it a coin – the bigger the baddie, the greater the value of the coin it provides. You can also find bonus treasure chests, that will give your money a boost.

Then, when you've finished the level, you're presented with a shop screen. Now you can buy that bigger sword you've always wanted or even that shield which would go so nicely with your tunic.

Possibly the most important item you can purchase is the extra continue. The only thing which makes this game tough (in the short term) is the lifespan of your character. He's got just one life and only one continue. So, kick the bucket twice on the same level, and it's game over.

If you do die, however, and then go on to reach the end of the level, you'll have a chance to buy back your continue. You're only allowed to carry one continue, so if you get through the level without dying, you're not allowed to buy another one.

Now, while all this sounds nice and playable, the game suffers from a couple of major drawbacks. The levels all look the same and the end-of-level bosses are laughably easy to beat. After a couple of days of serious playing, it's possible to suss the pattern for each level and therefore just waltz through all four of them.

Another thing that's a bit disappointing is that the game only caters for one player. You'd think with a name like *Chiki Chiki Boys,* you could play with your mate, or mates. Nope, you can choose who you want to be at the start of the game, but two of you can't play at the same time.

Even though the graphics and sound make for a playable coin-op conversion, the lack of challenge spoils anything you might have thought this game would have to offer.

® *Paul Mellerick*

GET A GRIP!

←→↑↓ Moves one of the Chiki twins around

Ⓐ Swishes your sword

Ⓑ Makes you jump up

Ⓒ Uses your magic if you're carrying any

THEN AGAIN...

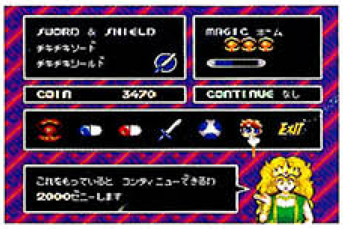
***Marvel Land* is cute and fluffy, and you won't finish it in a day**

There are scores of cute, garish platform games around on the Mega Drive, but *Marvel Land* is probably one of the best.

It has just been released officially under a different name (*Talmit's Adventure*) and most retailers will either carry the official or import version. Buy either – they're both the same.

SCORE 12700
COIN 4380
MAGIC ボム

Club the clam, but beware of the pearl



Yes, I'd go for the continue as well

Chiki Chiki Boys
© CAPCOM 1990
REPROGRAMMED GAME © SEGA 1992

PUBLISHER: Sega (Japan)

PRICE: £35 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Telegames 0533 516861

Don't be mislead by the game title, you can only play this by yourself

No options, so no skill levels

You've got one life gauge and one continue

No battery back-up or password, because you don't need them

Four worlds and eight separate levels

GRAPHICS 7
●●●●●●●○○○

SOUND 6
●●●●●●○○○○

GAMEPLAY 4
●●●●○○○○○○

GAME SIZE 4
●●●●○○○○○○

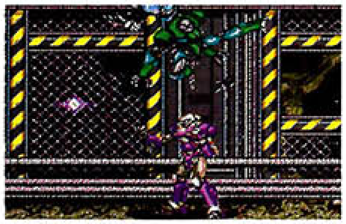
ADDICTION 4
●●●●○○○○○○

"There's nothing new in this game and there's very little challenge"

44 PERCENT

BLACK HOLE ASSAULT

While this particular compact disc may offer zilch in the way of gameplay, Neil West observes that it does make a pleasing "vsshhh" noise as you frisbee it out of the



The blue robot twitches menacingly at the green robot who's pretending to be a bat. He didn't jump up there (that implies some form of fluidity), he sort of twitched and jerked his way up. The graphics are *appaling*

Yet more decrepit robots aimlessly twitching at other decrepit robots in an attempt to beat each other up – that's what this game is all about. It's pathetic, it really is. Quite what Micronet (the authors of this follow-up to the appalling *Heavy Nova*) are playing at is completely beyond me.

Building on past successes or adopting an "if something ain't broke, then don't try to fix it" attitude are worthy (if somewhat conservative) maxims for producing a follow-up to a game – it worked OK for *Sonic 2*. Though why Micronet should bother to dig out their motley selection of recycled Zimmer frames for yet another sad, shambling totter through the motions of a beat-'em-up is unfathomable.

THIS GAME STINKS – BIG TIME

Let's take a look at what exactly is on offer. *Black Hole Assault* is a series of one-on-one beat-'em-ups in which you pit your particular robot against a series of progressively harder opponents. OK, so this formula may work just great for the *Streetfighter 2s* of this world, but when your man's (sorry, your robot's) repertoire of moves is restricted to just eight twitches, a little of the game's depth is lost. When the characters move slower than most standard Mega Drive game sprites, a little more is lost. When the controls are so unresponsive that the gameplay degenerates into merely facing off an opposing lump of metal and pounding your punch button through the floor, you begin to wonder whether it's worth calculating "how much is lost" and instead wonder if there's any game left at all.

A motley selection of recycled Zimmer frames

NOT MUCH GAME AT ALL

As we've said in MEGA before, this sort of game is simply not good enough. This is on the Mega CD for Sonic's sake! This is supposed to be the future of video games we're witnessing! But no, *Black Hole Assault* uses none of the hardware features which the Mega CD has on offer. As a result, it could at maximum score only 50%. If it were a Mega Drive game, it would score about 25%. Add those two factors together, and you get a colossal 14%. And I'm being generous.

Neil West

PACKING A PUNCH (OR NOT)

It's all about energy bars – it's simple, really. Here's how they work (and why sometimes your robot doesn't).

All nice, green and full of health. But, as your energy pack falls from 99.9...

... your ability to use your "special" bullet weapon diminishes. We *care?*

GET A GRIP!

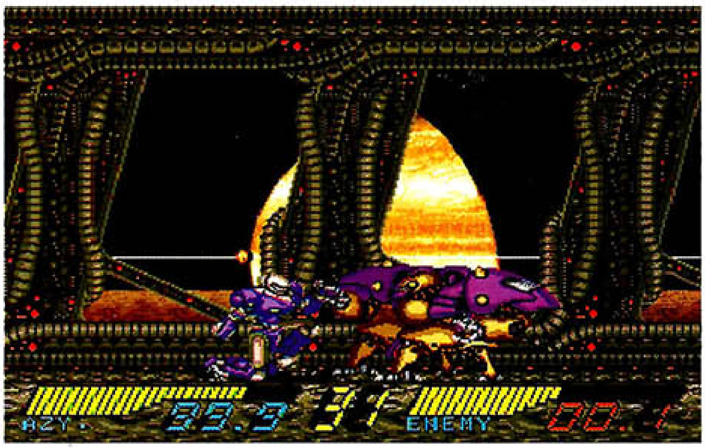
⏪ ⏩ Shuffles your robot left or right

⏫ ⏬ Makes your robot jump up and crouch down

Ⓐ Your robot delivers a kick (wow)

Ⓑ Makes your robot punch (so)?

Ⓒ No function (relief)



"Welcome, ladies and gentlemen to the main event of this evening's billing. In the red corner is Robocop's grandmother, in the blue – a large lilac blob"

BLACK HOLE ASSAULT
PRESS START BUTTON
MICRONET 1992

PUBLISHER: Micronet (IMPORT)

PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Krazy Konsoles
0422 342901

One or two masochists can have a good bash

There are three levels of skill to be found in this game

You've got an energy bar and infinite continues

Battery backed on CD, but no password system

Difficult to tell, we *think* we were close to finishing after level nine

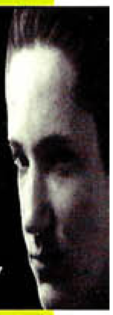
GRAPHICS 2
🔴🔴●●●●●●●●

SOUND 8
🔴🔴🔴🔴🔴🔴🔴🔴●●

GAMEPLAY 3
🔴🔴🔴●●●●●●●

GAME SIZE 3
🔴🔴🔴●●●●●●●

ADDICTION 1

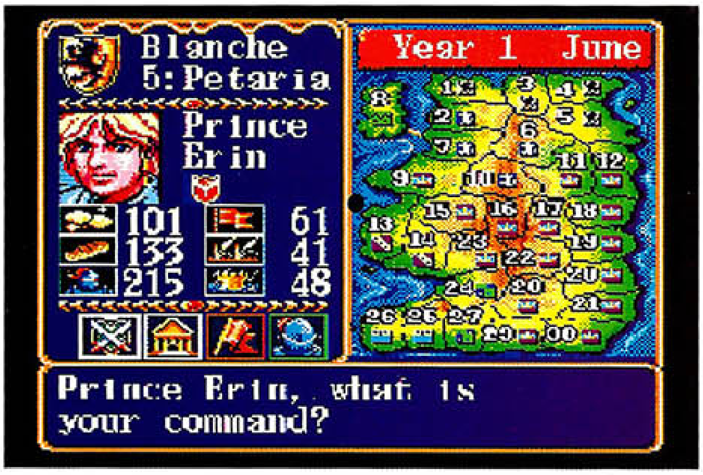


"Pure unadulterated tedium. The worst Mega CD game since the appalling *Heavy Nova* – and that's bad"

14 PERCENT

GEMFIRE

Is this epic strategy game a diamond or a dud? Amanda Dyson looks into her crystal ball...



Prince Erin, what is your command?

The main control screen shows the state of your stores and money reserves. Select one of the four icons below the numbers to give an order

Avert your eyes from his gaze, Erin, and we may yet be saved. For the mithral sword which hath slain the mighty Gondril lyeth not ten leagues from where we now stand atop the sacred mountain of Brindore. Look not into the eyes of the demon for it is evil. Blah, blah. Seek out the sword, and the world shall be saved. Blah, blah. Go, and go quickly. Blah blah.

You see? Anyone can do this fantasy lark. Make up a few names, cobble a mystical land together, throw in a couple of bad guys and you're on the heady path to becoming a rich and famous game designer. Well, probably. Koei has opened up the cliché cupboard and picked the battered cardboard box labelled "fantasy games" and tipped a liberal sprinkling of over-used and over-ripe plot elements into *Gemfire*. They're all there – wicked rulers, fair maidens locked up in towers, dragons, wizards and knights in shining armour. Why can't designers be just a touch more imaginative?

SEEK THE SEVEN GEMS

Anyway, the objective is to recover seven gems from a magical crown, and so become the leader of a reunited country, which for the moment has been split into 31 provinces. But while the plot is ripe for a *Shining in the Darkness*-style 3D romp, what you get is a complicated, but nevertheless moderately engrossing, strategy game. You play the part of one of four lords, all of whom are competing to find the gems.

Depending on the scenario, you start with a certain number of provinces, and you have to gradually take over the whole country by attacking the other lords and making peace pacts. If you're afraid of being stomped on by a powerful neighbour, you can hire monsters such as ogres, gargoyles and lizards to help boost your army.

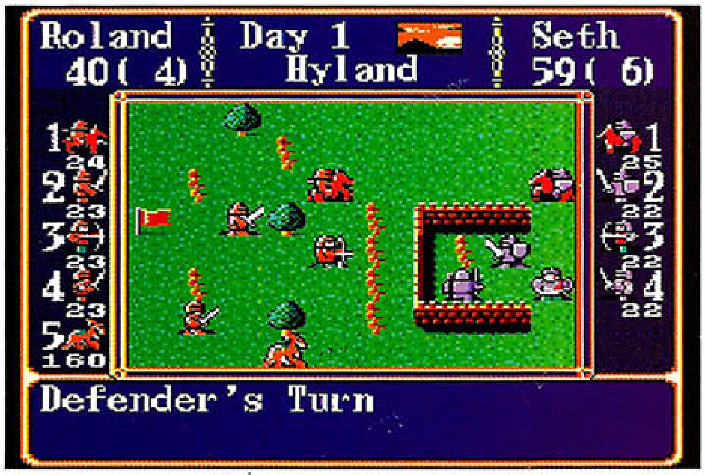
Each battle is played out in detail, with you controlling your troops on a top-down view of a tiny single-screen battlefield. The units have special attacking and defending abilities, but the whole thing is so simplistic that it usually boils down to who's got the most men, or who's got the most powerful monsters. It's all pretty sad stuff really.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

But soldiers don't work for free, and an army marches on its stomach (to coin a cliché), so you have to earn money and grow food. This is where the provinces come in again. Each month you have to give orders to all the provinces under your control, bearing in mind that you have to maintain food production for the people and the army, while taking care of recruitment, trade, negotiations or spying. There's plenty of stuff to do, but it's hard to keep track of what's going on, and even harder to see what effects your decision will have in the future.

Gemfire is a reasonable little strategy number, but it's just uninspiring and really rather dull. It looks OK and it's easy enough to get to grips with, but there's nothing in it that grabs you and makes you want to keep playing. It's all a bit of a yawn really, and I'm usually not averse to a spot of meddling with statistics and strategy. Not the best strategy game you'll ever come across, but equally it won't be the worst. Definitely one for fans of the genre.

® *Amanda Dyson*



Defender's Turn

The blues get ready to defend their meagre fortress, while the red attackers tread wearily around the side. ZZZZzzzzzzzzzz

GET A GRIP!

Ⓛ Ⓡ Ⓤ Ⓓ Moves the selector around the screen and directs your troops while in battle

Ⓐ Gets you some advice from the main screen

Ⓑ Cancels commands or selections

Ⓒ Confirms commands or selections

GEMFIRE
PRESS START
LICENSED BY SEGA ENTERPRISES, LTD.

PUBLISHER: Koei (IMPORT)

PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Telegames 0533 516861

Play by yourself or play with a friend – the choice is yours

SKILL! There are no skill levels as such

You have only one life, but there are hundreds of disposable soldiers

Battery-backed memory, so you can save your position

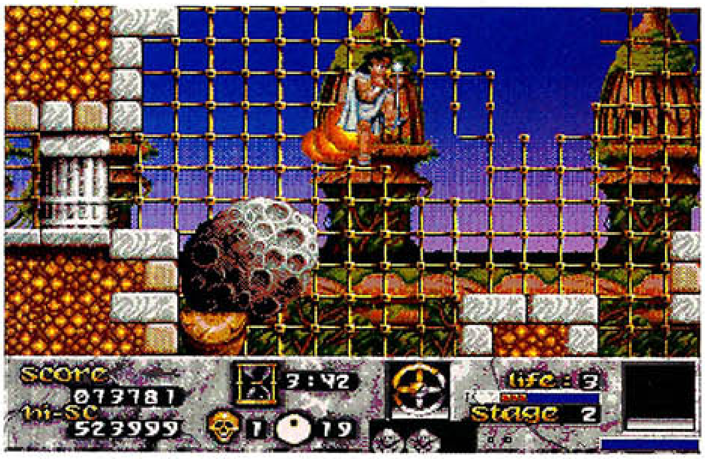
Four different scenarios of varying complexity

GRAPHICS ●●●●●○○○○○	5
SOUND ●●●●●○○○○○	5
GAMEPLAY ●●●●●●●○○○	7
GAME SIZE ●●●●●●●○○○	7
ADDICTION ●●●●●●○○○○	6

"Decent spot of strategy, but not the most exciting game you'll ever play. Take it or leave it"

59 PERCENT

In a change from the usual plot for a Mega Drive game, *Risky Woods* sets you about the task of rescuing monks. It's a novel idea, but Paul Mellerick finds it hard to get into the habit



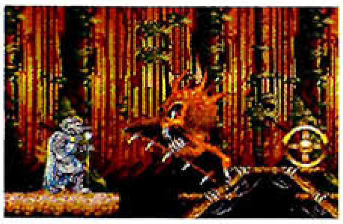
If you come across two log pieces, stop. As soon as you jump on these they'll trigger a falling rock, so you'd better jump out the way, quickly

RISKY WOODS

The first thing you need to do when you sit down to play *Risky Woods* is read the manual. If you plough straight into the game, you're going to get lost within the first two minutes. There's a lot of activity in here and at times it can be mightily confusing.

THIS PLOT BUSINESS

Draxos, the evil git who has imprisoned all the monks, is sitting up in his castle. He's successfully trapped the monks, paid the mortgage on his castle, and is now just lounging around enjoying life.



This git is a bit of a toughie. Fire at the head to kill him, and move on

Rohan (that's you, that is) decides to rescue the monks and defeat the evil Draxos. His followers can be dispatched with by a swift dagger to the chest, but Draxos's gatekeepers pose slightly more of a problem. Collect the two pieces to the key (found somewhere on the level) and press button C to use the key when you're at the gate. The key will light up in a sequence and you must input this sequence using Up, Down, Left and Right on the joypad.

Once inside Draxos's castle, it's worth noting that not every monk you see encased in stone is a real monk. Free the evil ones, and you'll suffer the consequences.

OK, so this quest business isn't going to be easy and you're going to need all the help you can get. Hey-presto, that's where the chests come in. Shoot a chest open and all will be revealed. Be careful though, because some items have both good and bad qualities. Suffice it to say, beware of the apple and the arrow.

One special power you have which nobody can take away from you is the ability to make armour. If you shoot an oncoming baddie, you'll see him drop a link of armour. Collect 33 of these links and you'll be donned in silver armour. This halves the amount of power you lose when you get hit. Collect 67 links, and you'll get the gold armour, which takes the full force of a hit. Bear in mind, however, that when you do get hit by something, you'll lose a link. Lose your life, and several links will disappear.

Each of your lives has 11 units of energy. Get hit or fall off screen (unless you're wearing gold armour) and the units decrease. If, however, you die by running out of energy, your units don't go down. The counter is only reset when it goes down to zero, but if this happens, you lose a life.

BOSS ADVANTAGE

This is OK in the platform stages, but when you get to the boss stage it can get very annoying, because if you die, the boss's energy goes back up to full (even if he is just about to die), but the timer keeps going.

Graphically and musically *Risky Woods* is very nice, and the game as a whole is brilliantly presented.

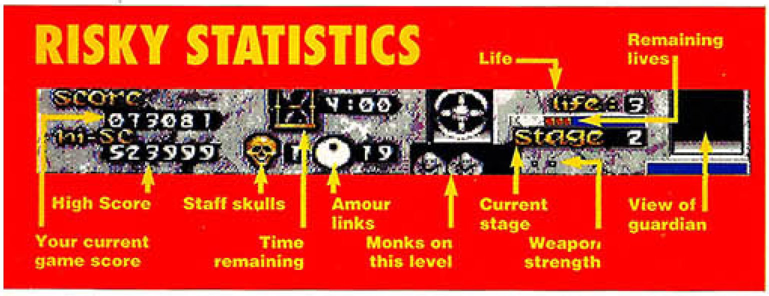
The levels, however, are repetitive, and once you've got hold of the gold armour, you'll find the game very easy. It's not the best platform game ever, but then it's not the worst either. It's just decidedly average.

® Paul Mellerick

GET A GRIP!

- Moves Rohan left and right through the scenery
- Ⓐ Fires the weapon that Rohan is currently carrying
- Ⓑ Makes Rohan jump up, over things or onto platforms
- Ⓒ Rohan uses the key to get past the gatekeepers

RISKY STATISTICS



RISKY WOODS
START
OPTIONS
1992
ELECTRONIC ARTS

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: December '92

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA 0753 549442

There's one player and one quest

Nope, no skill levels

You start with three lives and you can collect more

No battery back-up or passwords, but then you don't really need them

8 levels and 4 boss stages, so there's 12 in all

GRAPHICS 8

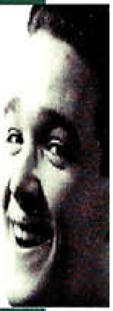
SOUND 8

GAMEPLAY 7

GAME SIZE 5

ADDICTION 4

> **"It's short-term fun, but once you've finished it you'll never come back"**



64 PERCENT

RAMPART

Here's a funny-looking bird. So Neil West is forced to chuck Amanda De Cadanet out of the office, to call her back only minutes later for a head-to-head game of *Rampart*

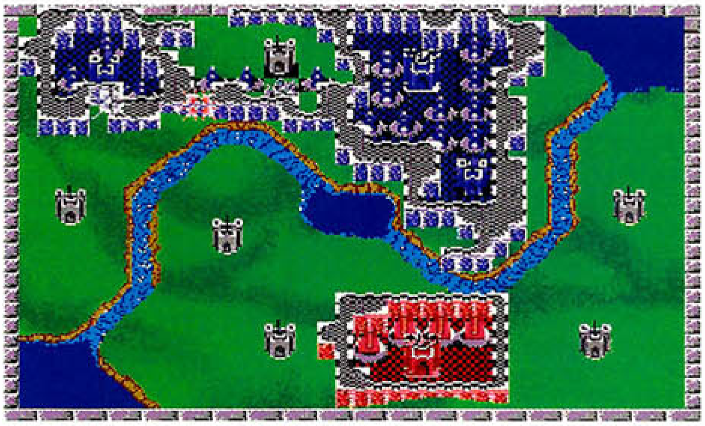
Now, you might be looking at these screenshots and thinking "Blimey, that doesn't look much like state of the art 16-bit entertainment to me, John". What I'd say to that, of course, is "Hey, don't judge a book by its cover. And stop calling me John".

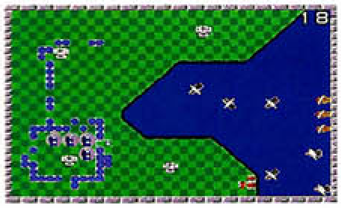
AN UNLIKELY COMBINATION

You might also be thinking that *Rampart* looks a little bit like a cross between *Missile Command, Tetris,* and the ancient Atari coin-op *Warlords*, but frankly that's unlikely, because the number of you out there who'll remember the ancient Atari coin-op *Warlords* is likely to be roughly on a par with the number of you out there who can whistle the whole of "Prelude à L'Après Midi D'Un Faune" by Claude Debussy while simultaneously balancing two snooker balls on top of one another on your nose. So we'll forget about that completely. Still, even if you simplify it down to *Missile Command* meets *Tetris*, you'd not be a great distance away from the truth, so let's go with that for now.

What happens in *Rampart* is that you start off with a castle on an island surrounded by walls. The castle is then attacked by enemy ships, which attempt to blow away the walls, enabling troops deposited by said ships when they reach the beach to storm your castle and mercilessly slaughter its inhabitants. This happens for a set period of time, after which there's a bit where you rebuild the castle walls by joining up lots of *Tetris*-type blocks to form an unbroken barrier. At this point you get a load more cannons with which to fire back at the enemy ships. (It is, of course, all a bit more complicated than this, but hey, we haven't got a great deal of room here.)

Rampart is all well and good for half-an-hour or so, but after that you'll notice that it never changes, and indeed gets really boring. Try playing the game in two-player mode, however, and it's a different kettle of fish entirely.

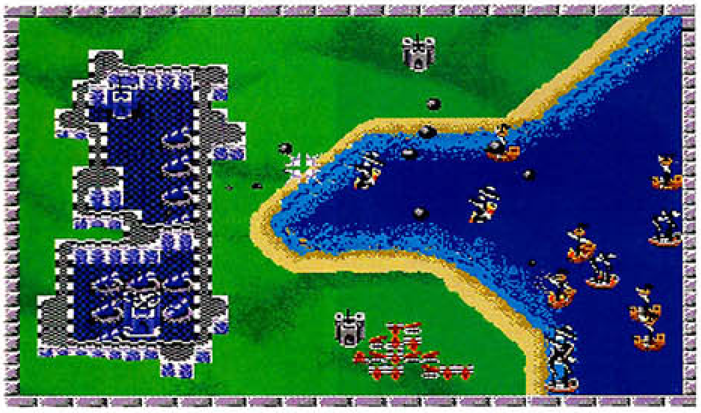

In the two-player game each player controls one side of the river and tries to knock out the other player. Here the blue player has a real advantage


After the battle you get a chance to rebuild your fortress using *Tetris*-like pieces. It's harder than it looks

FIRST CLASS FUN WITH A FRIEND

It's much the same game, except there aren't any ships and the two players face each other across a river and try to destroy each other's castles. This happens in such a way as to make rebuilding them difficult or impossible. It's very simple, but it's so frantic and panicky that it's enormous fun, and you'll play it for years and years. And that's it, really. If you've got any friends, this is fab to the point of being unmissable, but if you haven't – well, you're a bit of a sad case, aren't you?

® Neil West


Here we are in one-player mode, and the computer is really giving you some grief. Still, you've got a big enough castle and eight cannons for protection

GET A GRIP!

(↑)(↓)(←)(→) Moves your sights around the screen
Ⓐ Fires your cannon and rotates selected wall block
Ⓑ Places wall blocks so that you can rebuild your castle
Ⓒ No function

PUBLISHER: Tengen (IMPORT)
PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)
RELEASE: Out now
CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit
CONTACT: Telegames 0533 516861

Ordinary one-player snooze mode, or brilliant head-to-head
SKILL! Selectable levels at the start of the game, plus difficulty settings
One castle must be defended at all times
No battery back-up and no passwords
There are six levels

GRAPHICS 6
●●●●●●○○○○

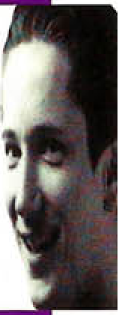
SOUND 7
●●●●●●●○○○

GAMEPLAY 7
●●●●●●●○○○

GAME SIZE 4
●●●●○○○○○○

ADDICTION 8
●●●●●●●●○○

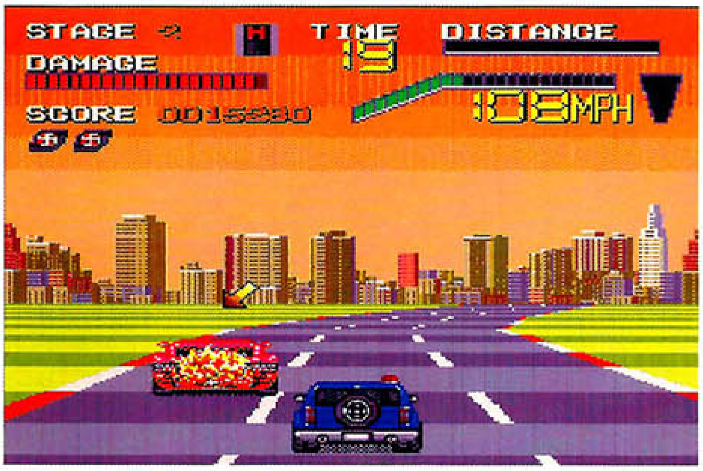
> **"It won't last you long in one-player mode, but with a chum this is top-notch entertainment"**



78 PERCENT

SUPER HQ

If you like to burn rubber, then you may like playing this game. Paul Mellerick would frankly rather go moshing in a synthetic black one-piece



Bash the crook's car and watch it burst into flames. When the damage meter is high (as in this case), he's almost had his day

The bad guys have busted loose and the cops are giving chase. The only trouble is they've lost the keys to their squad car, so they've got to catch the number 37 bus that stops outside the library on Acacia Avenue.

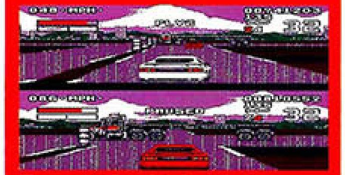
Well not exactly, but *Super HQ* does add a twist to the run-of-the-mill racing formula found in *Out Run* and *Lotus Turbo Challenge* by giving you three cars to choose from: a sporty little red number, a four-wheel drive jeep and a huge truck. Each has a rating for speed, strength and size. It's important not to go just for speed, because the aim of the game is to catch the criminal's car, and then force it to stop by ramming into it.

You must, therefore, pick your car carefully. Consider also the terrain – after all a sexy red sports car isn't any good on a mud track, is it? There are five levels in all, and probably the best way to attack this game is to use your sports car for the first two and the four-wheel jeep for the next two, saving the truck until last. This set-up, accompanied by appropriate turbo boosts, should ensure success.

BOOST OR BUST

Ah yes, the turbo boosts. You have three boosts, which temporarily make you go about 50 miles per hour faster. When driving the four-wheel drive and the truck it's essential that you use the boosts wisely, because otherwise you'll have real trouble catching the enemy. When you've run out of boosts, the game takes on a real nervous edge, as you're slowly bearing down on your opponent with only a few seconds left and a couple more hits to get.

THEN AGAIN...



You can't beat *Lotus Turbo Challenge* for drive-'em-up action

Lotus Turbo Challenge (reviewed in issue three of MEGA, 83%) is in a different class, especially with the split-screen two-player mode and the numerous weather effects.

The game doesn't really add anything new to the genre, though it does take several elements from other racing games. There's *Road Rash*-style bashing and bumping, leaps and jumps à la *Lotus Turbo Challenge* and the turbo speed found in the ageing classic *Super Hang-On*.

NOT SO SUPER

After a few warm-up games you'll soon get the hang of things, and catching the first few cars won't present a problem. The next two levels, however, are harder, because more cars get in your way and the opponents are faster. However, if you use the built-in continues, which start you from the same position but reset your timer and give you back three turbos, you'll finish the game easily.

Even though there are three cars to choose from, it won't take you long to get through the whole game, and when it's done and dusted, there's nothing to make you keep coming back for more. The game is good fun while it lasts, but with bigger and better games on the market, you'd be wise to look elsewhere.

® Paul Mellerick

GET A GRIP!

◄► Steers you left and right

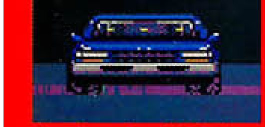
Ⓐ Brake – only for wimps

Ⓑ Turbo boost – you get only three

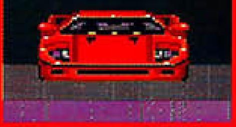
Ⓒ Accelerator – press and hold down

WHAT CAR?

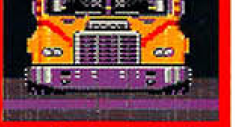
Choose your car according to the terrain you're racing on, and bear in mind which car the criminal is driving



The four-wheel drive is tough, and it can clock up a decent speed. This is the best all-round choice



The sports car is fast, but not particularly strong. This red number isn't the one to go for if you're a Sunday driver



Knuckle-heads should choose the truck for its sheer power. It is, however, rather slow off the mark

SUPER H.Q.™
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PUBLISHER: Taito (IMPORT)

PRICE: £35 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Telegames 0533 516861

You're on your own

SKILL! There are normal and hard levels of skill

Just the one car, and there's a time limit on each stage

No passwords and no battery back-up

There are five different levels

GRAPHICS	**4**
🔴🔴🔴🔴⚫⚫⚫⚫⚫⚫	
SOUND	**6**
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GAMEPLAY	**4**
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GAME SIZE	**3**
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ADDICTION	**5**
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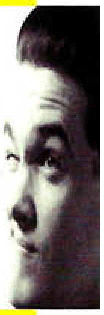
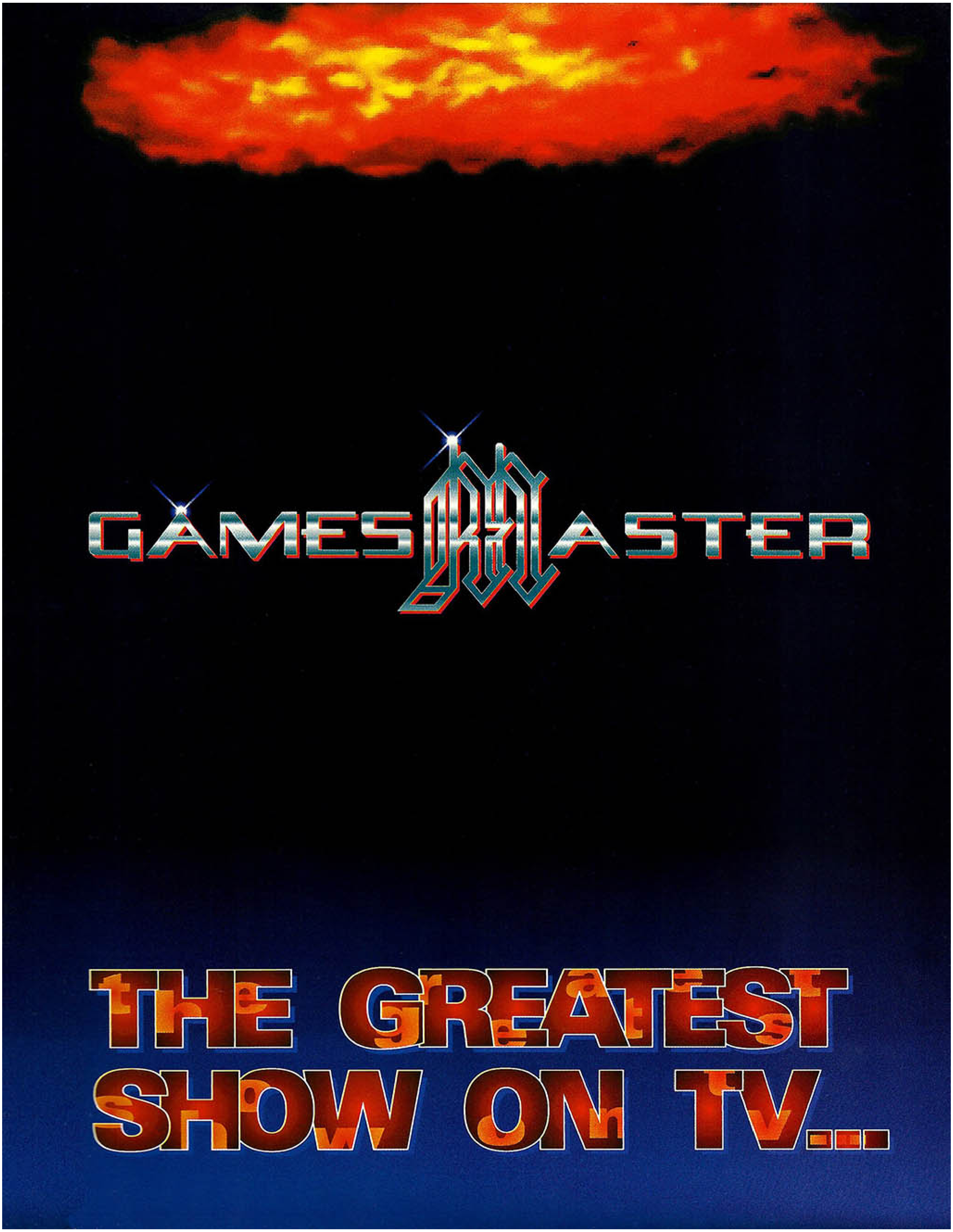
"In the short-term it's fun and hard, but after a few plays you'll crack it wide open"



44 PERCENT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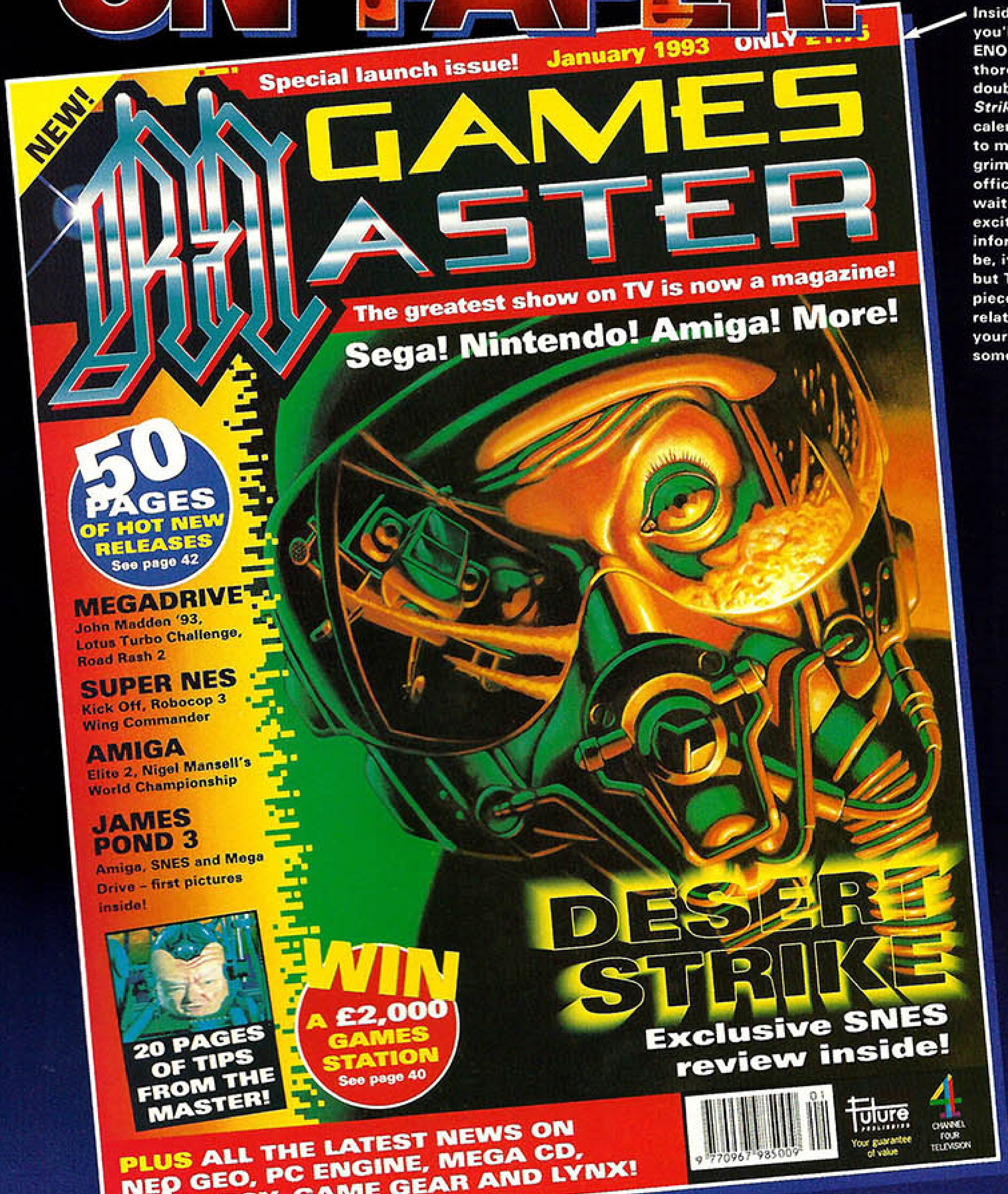

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AXELAY
GAMES MASTER TIP
OVERALL
80
JUDGEMENT
REVIEWS (SNES)
PAGE FIFTY-FOUR
PAGE FIFTY-FIVE

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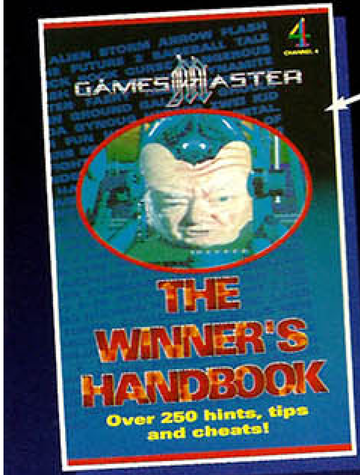
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Over 250 hints, tips and cheats!

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GAMESMASTER

MEGA PLAY

We've got passwords, we've got cheats, we've got a classic tip. In fact, the only place you're likely to find bigger and better tips than these is in next month's issue of MEGA

TIPS DIRECTORY

Alien 3	68
Arch Rivals	79
Art Alive	79
Atomic Runner	78
Bart Vs The Space Mutants	77
Batman	68
Batman Returns	68
Budokan	68 and 76
California Games	76
David Robinson's Basketball	79
Desert Strike	68 and 77
Dragon's Fury	67
ESWAT	77
Evander Holyfield's Boxing	67
Ferrari Grand Prix	79
Gain Ground	77
Galahad	67
Gley Lancer	68
Grand Slam Tennis	68
Greendog	77
Hellfire	68 and 79
Immortal, The	67 and 76
Insector X	67
James Pond 2	68
Joe Montana 2	66
John Madden Football '92	68
Kid Chameleon	68 and 74
Lemmings	67 and 78
Lotus Turbo Challenge	66
Marble Madness	66
Mario Lemieux	67
Marvel Land	67
Moonwalker	66
Olympic Gold	78
Onslaught	67
Pac-Mania	68
Phantasy Star II	77
Populous	78
Quackshot	68 and 77
Rolling Thunder 2	68
Side Pocket	79
Smash TV	78
Sonic The Hedgehog	74 and 76
Spider Man	68
Splatterhouse 2	67
Starflight	78
Stormlord	67
Streets of Rage	66 and 74
Super Hang-On	68
Super Hydlide	77
Taz-Mania	76
Team USA Basketball	77
Terminator	68, 78 and 79
Thunderforce IV	68
Thunderstorm FX	67
Toki: Going Ape Spit	76
Turbo Out Run	68
Turrican	67
Twin Cobra	78
Wonderdog	66
World Cup Italia '90	68

YOUR TIPS!

The sender of the best tip each month wins a cart. Write to MEGA PLAY, MEGA, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

WONDERDOG

PLANET KNINUS.
ZONE 1 OF 4.

This is the last planet Wonderdog visits – so the passwords do work

Just in case you're having any problems getting through this great Mega CD platform game, here are the passwords for all the levels.

Bunny Hop Meadow – No password
Dogsville – MYSTIC
Scrapyard – ANKLES
Loony Moon – LEDZEP
Planet Weird – REEVES
Planet Foggia – PIXIES
Planet Kninus – WOOPIE

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

Night
PASSWORD SLEEPERS

Fancy a bit of night-time driving? Enter "sleepers" and away you go

Our man Andy Dyer brings you all the passwords for this great little driving game. You may notice that the name of the level and the passwords actually fit together to make witty little ditties, ie Marsh and Mallow. I'll be darned if I can figure out where Interstate and Standish come into things – if you know, drop us line.

LEVEL	PASSWORD
Night	Sleepers
Fog	Herbert
Snow	Business
Desert	Applepie
Interstate	Standish
Marsh	Mallow
Storm	Tea Cup

MOONWALKER

This is an old tip, but we're not averse to resurrecting tips here In MEGA PLAY. Thanks go to ***Adam Edge*** from Marlow Bottom in Buckinghamshire for bringing it back to our attention.

Press and hold Up, Left and A on pad two, then press Start on pad one and select a single-player game, then use Left or Right to change the level.

JOE MONTANA 2

This tip may look a bit lengthy, but it's definitely worth a butcher's, because it's so comprehensive. No matter which team you want to be, and no matter which week you want to start at, it can all be done with the great password breaker.

Use the following code: (team)00(stage)XXXXAX. Where it says team, enter the letter beside the team. Where it says stage also enter that letter.

TEAMS:	WEEKS:
A – Atlanta	B – Week 1
B – Buffalo	C – Week 2
C – Chicago	D – Week 3
D – Cincinatti	E – Week 4
E – Cleveland	F – Week 5
F – Dallas	G – Week 6
G – Denver	H – Week 7
H – Detroit	I – Week 8
I – Green Bay	J – Week 9
J – Indianapolis	K – Week 10
K – Kansas City	L – Week 11
L – Houston	M – Week 12
M – L A Raiders	N – Week 13
N – L A Rams	O – Week 14
O – Miami	P – Week 15
P – Minnesota	Q – Week 16
Q – New Orleans	R – Playoff round 1
R – New England	S – Playoff round 2
S – New York Giants	T – Sega Bowl
T – New York Jets	
U – Philadelphia	
V – Phoenix	
W – Pittsburgh	
X – San Diego	
Y – Seattle	
Z – San Francisco	
0 – Tampa Bay	
1 – Washington	

STREETS OF RAGE

To get some extra points, save your "special attack" until you've defeated the boss, and use it just before he hits the ground. Thanks go to ***Tom Ackerley*** of Warrington for that one.

MARBLE MADNESS

17240 00
5350 00

On your marks, get set.. go! Now roll those marbles as fast as you can to see who finishes first

This tip comes from ***Iain Grant***, Rowlands Gill, Tyne and Wear. Play the two-player game, but play player one as fast as possible, then let player two lose. For each round player one wins he'll get five extra seconds, giving you more time to win.

DRAGON'S FURY

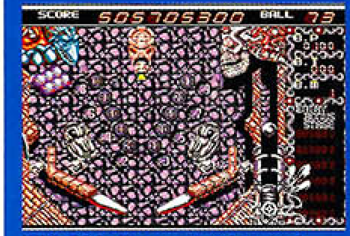
Loads of people have sent in tips for this pinball game, so here goes.

Firstly, we've got to thank *Paul McNally* from Dingle, Merseyside, for this one. Press and hold down button B to full strength, release the ball, and press B again to send it shooting up to the top field, where the really big points can be made.

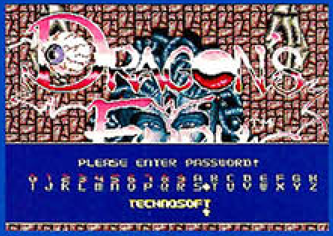
Secondly, we've heard from *Rupert Abbot* of West Lavington, who has some quite astounding passwords. Enter UUBV99BQRE to get 505,705,300 points and 73 balls, or try TECHNOSOFT to start with 2,000,000 points and 10 balls.

While we're at it, we might as well remind you that there are a couple of codes at the back of the manual. Enter TIMETRIAL0 to play for three minutes to see who gets the best score, or if you don't like the sound, enter BGMOFFMODE to turn in off.

And finally, if your ball looks as if it's going out of play, pause the game, and press button A to bring up your password. Now press Reset, and your password will be remembered. This enables you to start from where you finished without losing a ball. Be warned though, because you do lose any secret stages that you may already have completed.



With 73 balls you stand a good chance of finishing this. Mind you, there's still a long way to go



If you fancy playing the game from the very start, then ten balls and two million points might be useful

SCORE 000000000 BALL 02

As you let the ball go from the start, press button B and the ball shoots up into the top playing area

GALAHAD

With this cheat you can skip the boring parts of the game

This is a mysterious cheat, which was sent in by an anonymous reader. Enter LTUS then press Start to skip levels (go right to the end if you so wish) and become invincible.

INSECTOR X

If you're in need of some extra goes in this game, push diagonal Left and Up, then press C on the game-over screen for an extra continue. You can do this as many times as you like, so it's effectively an infinite continues cheat.

MARVEL LAND

The Mega Drive has 512 colours, so why did the programmers use all the yukky ones for this game?

Enter ARDE as your password and you can then select any level you like. ***Mr I K Pickering*** of Lowestoft sent this cheat in.

MARIO LEMIEUX

Our eternal gratitude goes to ***B Bulham*** from Carlisle, who sent in this *Mario Lemieux* code and also the *Inspector X* cheat. The code to get Detroit vs Montreal in the final is K45C LVA5 8E23. But if you fancy trying to get to the final yourself, you might like to try out this excellent cheat sent in by ***John Ritchie*** from Bonnyrigg, Midlothian. He says that if you enter XXXX XXXX XXXX on the password screen and then go to Cancel and press button A, you'll come to the selection screen. Now play a tournament, and when the team details come up, you can change them to whatever you want. Great huh!

TURRICAN

If you fancy some extra fun on this big shoot-'em-and-explore-game, then on the title screen push Down and press A, B, B, A, B, A, A, B, A, A, B, A, A.

You can now choose from infinite lives, other options or a level select. Cheers to ***Michael Hall*** from Birmingham for sending in that lovely cheat.

ONSLAUGHT

Michael Hall has also sent in this cheat for *Onslaught*. Go to the options menu and press the A, B and C buttons as fast as possible until the words Cheat On appear at the bottom of the screen.

Michael didn't actually say what this sequence of button pushing does, but there you go. If you've got the game, try it and you'll find out.

EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S "REAL DEAL" BOXING

If you're having trouble getting through this boxing sim, then try this tip and become the ultimate fighter. Start the Career Mode and create a new fighter. Enter you name as THE BEAST and you'll be green skinned.

You'll also notice that your power, stamina, skill and defence bars are full. Now you're unbeatable, and you should be able to win the World Championship, except if you're crap that is.

THE IMMORTAL

Did you know that you can avoid the very difficult sensor room on level five? No?

Well, buy the shrink potion and return to the first room. Drink the potion and let it wear off. Now wait until you die. When you come alive again, you continue in the room after the sensor room. Thanks to ***Kevin Neale*** from Grays in Essex for that one.

STORMLORD

Steven King from Wigan says that to get nine lives in this game, press A, A, A, A, C, C, B, B, B, C and A. For extra time, press pause then B, A, A, A, C, Up, Up, Up, A, A and A. Thanks for that Steven, I'm sure someone will find that very useful.

SPLATTERHOUSE 2

If you're fed up with entering a password every time you play this spooky (not to mention gory) little platform game, then this level select cheat is just for you.

On the title screen (make sure the menu is not on screen) press Down, Down, B, Down, Down and C. The level select should appear, and you can now choose your level. Neat huh.

THUNDERSTORM FX

If you've got a Mega CD, then *Thunderstorm FX* is probably the best looking game you can buy. It is tough, but thankfully there are several cheat modes, which make the whole thing a lot easier to get through. Firstly, there's a level select. On the title screen press Left, Right, A, B, and C. Now when you start the game and the screen comes up showing which stage you're on, press Left or Right to select the stage. And

Turn Over

LEMMINGS

It's a great game, and each level has a password. There are six levels, and here at MEGA PLAY we bring you all the codes for all these levels. "Goodness, gracious me," we hear you cry. So, here they are, the codes for the Fun, Tricky, Taxing, Mayhem, Present and Sunsoft levels. They should keep you busy for a while!

FUN	TRICKY	TAXING	MAYHEM	PRESENT	SUNSOFT
1. NONE	YTDYD	YFDTD	MWDYD	NZGJW	BRGPW
2. QWKYN	MSJXX	ZJKWP	PVJXX	IDNMH	QSMNQ
3. NDDTD	XFDWF	CRDQF	MLDWP	SPGGX	HVHCB
4. SWKYN	TSJXX	DNKWP	KNKPB	DXNCL	PMMFT
5. FTDWN	TVDXM	VKDSN	PQDPR	RXHYJ	GZH
6. KMKBX	HMKZG	BSLPB	HHXRX	XBNCV	ZQMSX
7. HTDWN	SYDXN	DZDJR	PFDMS	WMHWK	MHHRF
8. MMKBX	PMKZG	FWLPB	HWKNL	HGNRP	KGMQY
9. VDDTD	LKDWF	SNDHJ	JTDKK	RBGKW	HHGMX
10. ZWKYN	DMKPB	TRKXT	GHJBX	XFNMH	BNMFT
11. XDDTD	PYDMJ	WYDDK	NXDYD	WQGGX	NLHZB
12. CXKYN	LMKPB\	XVKXT	GWJXX	HYNCL	LCMCV
13. PTDVM	LPDPR	PSDGS	LYDXN	VYBYJ	XLHTF
14. TMKBX	YFKRK	VLXBX	DQKZG	BDNCV	MNMSY
15. RTDVM	KSDPR	CLDVD	QRDPR	ZNHWK	YDHRG
16. WMKBX	GGKRK	DPKXP	JJKRK	RNNTP	BHNKC
17. VHDVD	SGDPJ	GWDRF	ZJDPJ	RMGNW	PLHHB
18. ZZKZN	GFKNC	HSKXP	SHKNC	XQNQH	DNMGV
19. XHDVD	RRDLK	YPDTN	ZXDLX	WBGLX	VZGSW
20. CBKBP	NFKNC	FXLQB	DSJFX	HKNHL	SRMVP
21. PXDWM	NHDNS	HFDLR	JVDFN	VKHDK	TFHSG
22. TQKCX	BYKPL	JBLRB	BMKHG	BPNGV	NLNLC
23. RXDWM	MLDMS	WSDJJ	JKDCP	ZYHZK	ZBHXX
24. WQKCX	JYKPL	XWKLT	BBKFH	LSNVP	XZNHD
25. FJDVD	FWDLK	WSDJJ	CYD	VNGW	VBHFC
26. KBKBP	XJJCX	XWKLT	ZZXSB	BSNQH	CTMRP
27. HJDVD	JWDZD	ZDDGK	HRDRJ	ZCGLX	PRGMX
28. MBKBP	FKJCX	BBXHT	ZPKQC	LLNHL	MJMPQ
29. YVDWM	FMDCN	SXDHS	FSDQS	YLHDK	SZHFK
30. DRKCX	SCKFG	FXKFX	XJXSL	PQNGV	HCNFD

And you thought this tips business was easy work, did you? Well, it isn't. Not only do we have to sift through hundreds of tips every month and decide which ones to print, we then have to have a look through and decide which is the best tip of the month. Well, this month's lucky guy is *Jonathan Wood* from North Shields, who must have worked really hard to get these passwords for *Rolling Thunder.*

Well done Jonathan, you've won a Game Gear. Yes,we know we said that we'd run out, but we found one more to give away. Next month someone will win a cart of their choice.

Keep those tips coming.

ROLLING THUNDER 2

A couple of months back, in issue one of MEGA to be precise, we printed the passwords for *Rolling Thunder 2.* They were actually the passwords for just the normal level. If you fancy using passwords to conquer the hard level, here they are. Thanks go to *Jonathan Wood* from North Shields.

Level 2 – A MAGICAL THUNDER LEARNED THE SECRET
Level 3 – A MAGICAL ISOTOPE BLASTED THE DEVICE
Level 4 – A PRIVATE LEOPARD PUNCHED THE NEURON
Level 5 – A SLENDER FIGHTER ELECTED THE GENIUS
Level 6 – A DIGITAL RAINBOW MUFFLED THE SECRET
Level 7 – A LOGICAL THUNDER SMASHED THE POWDER
Level 8 – A ROLLING MACHINE DESIRED THE THUNDER
Level 9 – A SLENDER NUCLEUS BLASTED THE TARGET
Level 10 – A CURIOUS ISOTOPE CREATED THE KILLER
Level 11 – A NATURAL PROGRAM DESIRED THE NEURON

if you press Start while you're playing you'll automatically finish the level. If you fancy playing through the game in Easy mode, press Right, Up, Left, Down and A on the title screen. Now enter the Config Mode and choose Easy. And finally, just for fun, press Up, Down, Left, Right, B, C and A on the title screen. This allows you to play around with the animation of the game, and potentially all sorts of other things. If you find anything else hidden in the game, drop us a line and let us know.

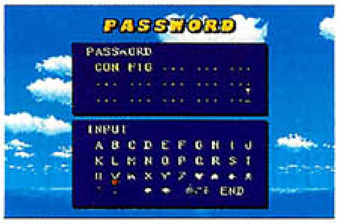
THUNDERFORCE IV

All the other *Thunderforce* games had hidden cheats in them and it's nice to know that the tradition is still going strong. During play, pause the game by pressing Start and then press Up, Right, A, Down, Right, A, C, Left, Up and B. Now press Up to get all the weapons. There, that should make things a bit easier. One thing to bear in mind is that this cheat only works if you haven't changed anything from the options menu. You have been warned.

GLEY LANCER

More shoot-'em-up action, but it's not in the same class as *Thunderforce IV.* If you find this game a bit easy, you might like to try Mania mode to really pump up the action. When the title screen appears and the words "Push Start Button" are flashing, press Up, Down, Left, Right, B and A. The title should now turn gold in colour and you can choose the Mania game from the options screen.

GRAND SLAM TENNIS



Put the dots in right up to the end, or the password won't work

This tip may not work for the American version, which is called *Jennifer Capriati Tennis*, but if you've got the Japanese version, it'll definitely do the job.

Enter the password screen and enter the word CONFIG and as many dots as fill the space. The game will now fade into a config mode and you will be able to change certain attributes of your player and, indeed, change the computer level. This will make things much easier for you.

JOHN MADDEN '92

This is a completely useless and boring cheat, sent in by **Peter Manning** from Cheshire. He says that if you fancy getting to the final but don't want to play the game yourself, just put the game on demo mode with the game set to play the play offs. Now sit back and watch the computer play all the way through. Then note down the code, which you can then use to play the final. It does work, but only if you can stay awake that long.

HELLFIRE

To get this tip to work takes some time, but it does work so stick at it. Go to the option screen and select Easy, four lives and Rapid fire.

Now when you defeat the boss at the end of level one, get ready. Press your Hellfire button (C) just as the first bit of the sprite is falling off the screen, then press the Hellfire button again straight afterwards.

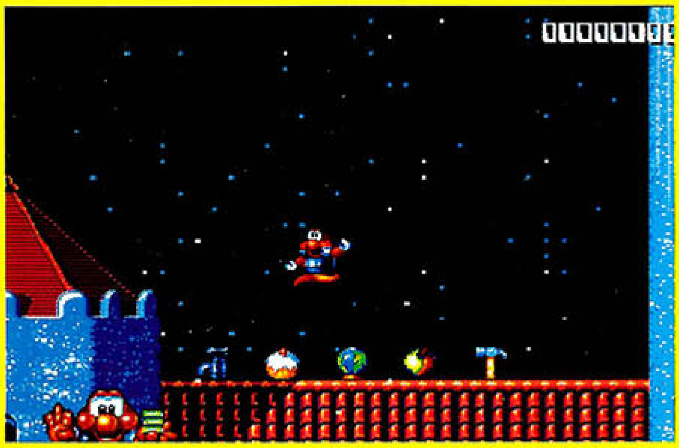
If you've done it correctly, the screen will go yellow. Then level two starts and you'll be invincible to enemy firepower. If you press button C again though, you'll revert back to normal. Beat everything and you'll get the end sequence which tells you that another force is attacking.

IT'S CLASSIC TIP TIME

Yes, it's that time of the month again where we unlock the MEGA vault of tips, close our eyes, and pull out a tip. If you've seen it before, tough, because this section is for new Mega Drive owners who wouldn't know a tip from a big round blue blob.

Anyway, here's the tip, which this month is for that classic game of fish heroics – *James Pond 2: Codename Robocod.* At the very start of the game walk right and use your extended body to climb up to the top of the roof above you. You'll see five items. Collect them in the following order: cake, hammer, earth, apple and tap.

If you take the first letter of each of these objects and put them together, you'll find they spell the word CHEAT. This will now make you invincible for ten minutes, which should give you enough time to complete the game, and defeat the evil Dr Maybe.



These little pieces don't appear in the order C, H, E, A ,T, so be careful when collecting them. If you do mess up, however, it doesn't really matter, because this is the very start of the game. Just try again

GAME GENIE AND ACTION REPLAY CODES

Thanks to *Darren Caldwell* of Stockton-on-Tees, *T Glover* of Wood Green, and *T Wood* of Buxton, Derbyshire, who between them sent in the following Action Replay and Game Genie passwords.

Don't forget that if you've got an Action Replay (pro version) cart and have discovered some cracking codes to go with it, send them in to us at MEGA PLAY. And if you're a Game Genie owner, take a look at ARENA on page 74 to see if you can come up with any whacky codes. You never know your luck; if you send something in, you might win a cart.

ACTION REPLAY

Terminator:
FF147 D001F – Infinite energy
Batman:
FF431 C0006 – Infinite lives
Desert Strike:
006AA 44A79 – Infinite lives
00689 C4A79 – Infinite fuel
0049D 07FFF – Infinite armour
Quackshot:
FF8F9 70008 – Infinite energy
Batman Returns:
FFFE3 20003 – Infinite lives
Alien 3:
FF084 50099 – Infinite guns
FF090 B0009 – Infinite lives
FF086 70059 – Infinite time
FF086 70059 – Infinite missiles
Budokan:
FF81B A007F – Infinite stamina
Turbo Out Run:
FF9EF 7003B – Stops clock

GAME GENIE

Kid Chameleon:
H49A AA7J – Infinite time
A46A AA32 – Infinite lives
GNBT JAB4 – Start on Plethora
Pac-Mania:
S60T BA66 – Infinite lives
KBCA AS22 – Ghosts stay blue eight times longer
Spider Man:
ALBT CA9R – Infinite lives
AKZA CA68 – Shooting a web requires no energy
AKGT CA90 – Infinite number of pictures
James Pond 2:
R1RT R6X0 – Master code (must be entered)
AJYT AA20 – Keep wings
AJ8T AA9G – Infinite lives
Super Hang-On:
DLMA AA9E – Freeze clock
AFMA CADY – Best brakes in Original cost $100
AFMA CAET – Best muffler in Original $100
World Cup Italia '90:
AJZA BE3G – Each goal is worth two
A2ZA BE3G – Each goal is worth six
ATYA BE32 – Time goes four times faster

ALIEN 3

The aliens have landed! Well actually you brought them with you and now it's up to you to rescue the hostages and kill all that alien scum. It's not easy, but we at MEGA show you how to go about it

PUBLISHER: Sega

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: October '92

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

MEGA SAYS:

A very atmospheric platform game with lovely graphics and sound. It's just a shame that the gameplay doesn't change from one level to the next. If you're having trouble completing the game, we show you what to expect around every corner, and, where necessary, how to avoid it.

After playing *Alien 3* for just a short time, you'll realise one thing. This game in BIG. Not only are the levels big, but there are fifteen of them as well as five big mother of all alien guardians to deal with. The levels are decidedly hard, because you're up against a time limit and there are aliens all over the place.

That's where this month's RIP 'N' TIP comes into things. We've all played the game in the office and we believe that most people can get as far as level ten, because it's only after then that things really start to get difficult. So, in this section, we address levels 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15. If you are still having problems with the earlier levels, however, you can always write to the MEGA MEDIC. But for now, here are the maps for the later levels of *Alien 3*, accompanied by tips on how to beat each guardian.

The maps are very nicely detailed and easy to use, and it shouldn't take you too long to get the feel of them. Also, take a look at the description for each level, and prepare yourself for the problems which the stages pose. Before you start trying to decipher them, however, take a look at the key of icons on page 72.

Just before we get heavily into the game, MEGA would like to thank the guy who sent in the (very detailed) maps and the complete solution. Unfortunately, the sender forgot to write down his/her name and address. You know who you are though, so thanks very much. Now, read on and prepare to rip *Alien 3* to shreds...

GET A GRIP!

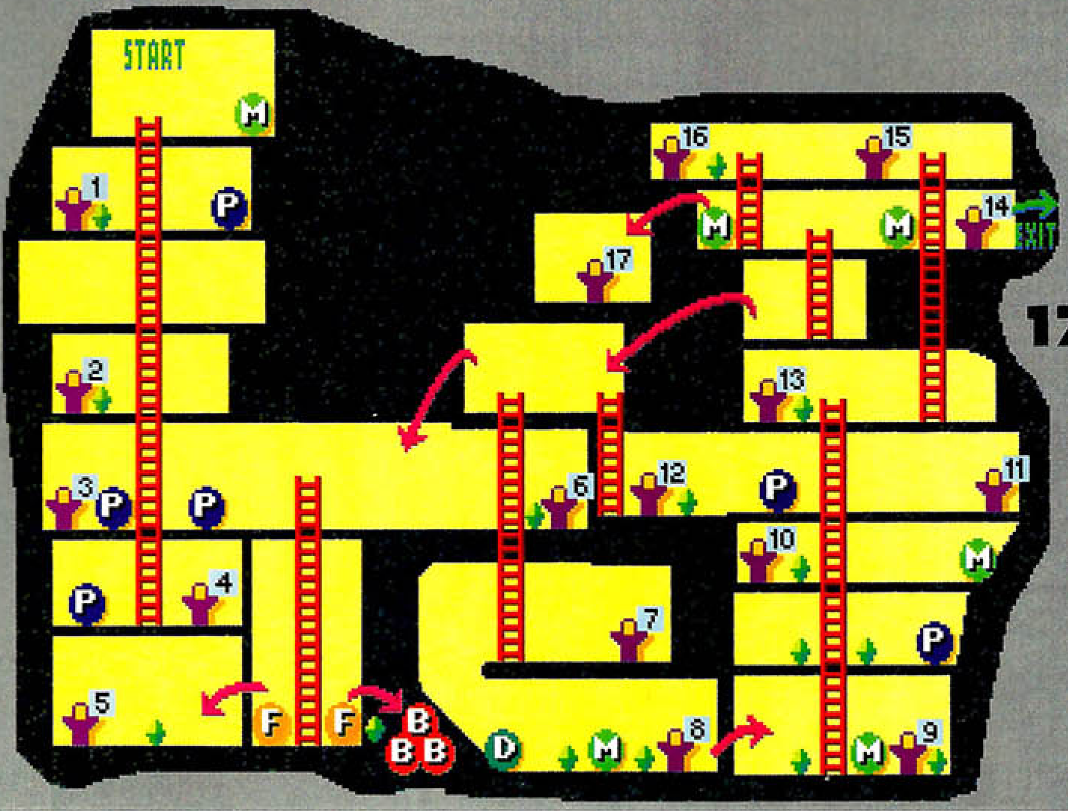
◀ ▶ Moves your character left and right around the screen

▼ Makes your character crouch

Ⓐ Selects your chosen weapon

Ⓑ Fires your currently selected weapon

Ⓒ Makes ol' slap-head Ripley jump



THAT KEY

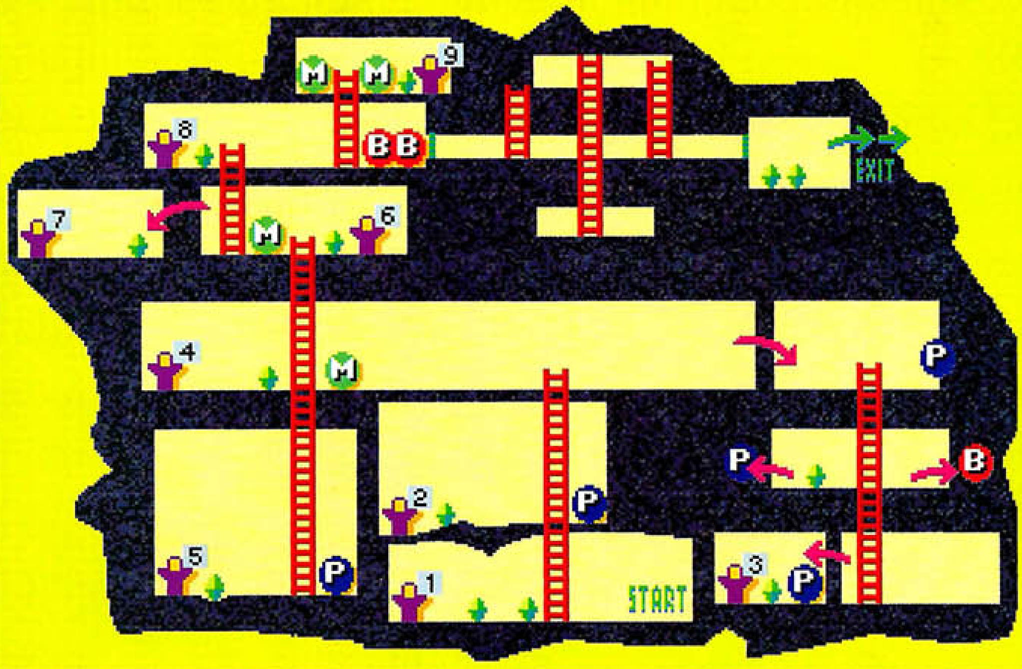
Having trouble working out what all these strange lines, letters and symbols are? Then what *you* want to do is turn on page 72 for the key.

SCENE 4 STAGE 11: 17 HOSTAGES

By looking at the map on the left you can figure out which way to go, and we advise you to take things very carefully on this particular stage.

Because of the number of hidden passages in this level, Aliens like to run out and surprise you. Also, try to work out a way of killing the Alien eggs before the face-huggers jump out at you. The key on page 72 shows you what all the things you need are, so be careful with your energy and (more importantly) with those weapons.

These levels are hard, but if you know where to go and in which order to collect those hostages, it shouldn't be too much of a problem. You haven't got much time, but it's worth having a look at the disgusting scenery as you run through the level – it looks horrible, and I wonder what it smells like? Urrgh!



SCENE 4 STAGE 12: 9 HOSTAGES

On this level, there are less hostages to worry about. There is, however, more space to run through, and more space means more free-roaming Aliens. Watch yourself when you appear at the top of the ladders, because, more often than not, an Alien is waiting for you. Take each stage carefully and watch that Motion Tracker for any signs of movement. Take it easy.

Because the scenery is similar to the last level (ie there's disgusting slime dripping from all over the place) you've got to be careful when running through it. You can't see the floor, which means that you might not see the Alien eggs and face-huggers lying around. Take a careful look at the map before you start, and keep that Pulse Rifle at the ready.

As soon as you run off stage 12, (providing you get through it of course) you'll come up against the scene four guardian. Get ready, because this is one tough mother Alien.

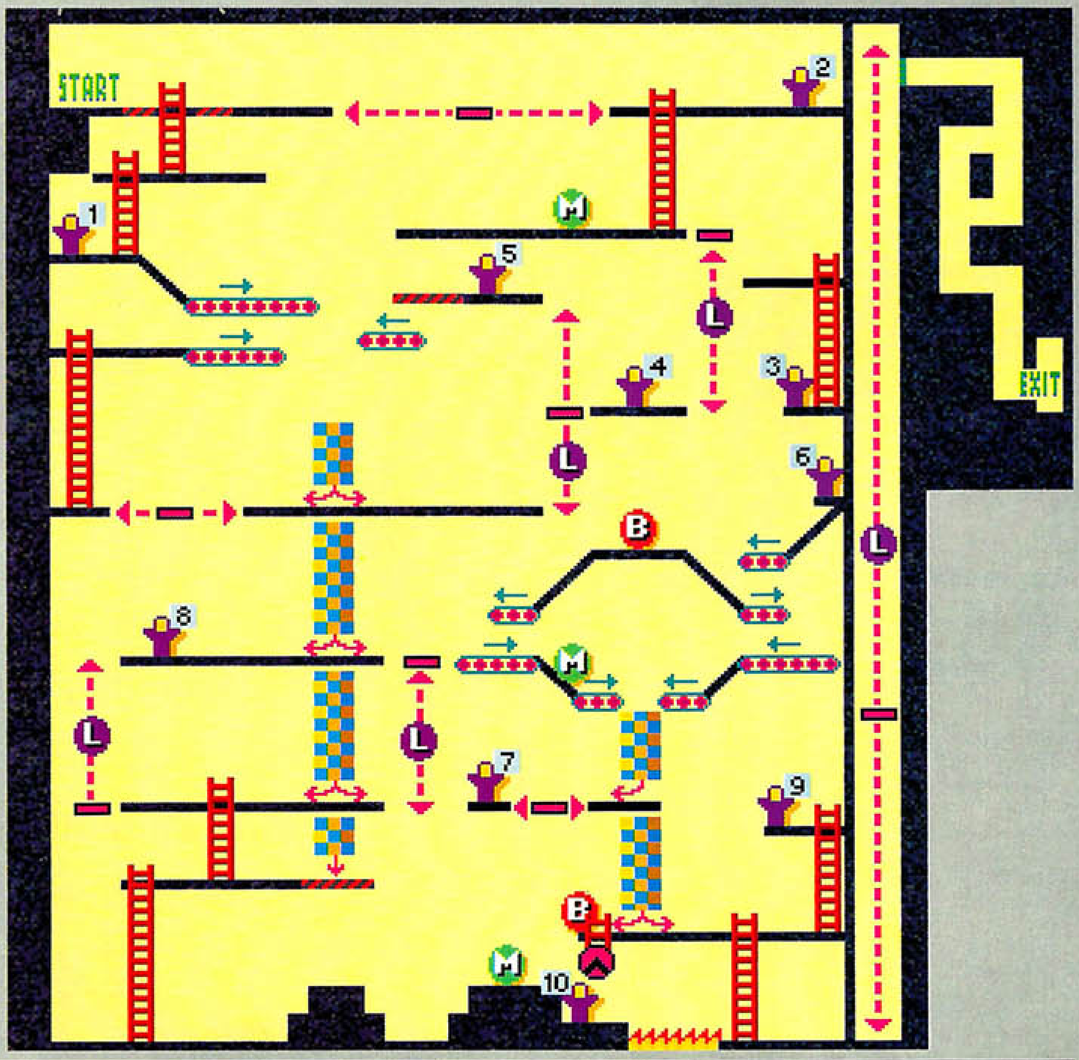
The best advice is to stand your ground (easy to say when you're not staring at an eight-foot mutant Alien) and use the grenade launcher. Several hits are needed to kill him/her/it(?).

SCENE 4 STAGE 13: 10 HOSTAGES

This is a big sprawling level, but after your tangle with the scene four guardian you could probably do with a rest. The map shows the pretty obvious route to take, but you've got to be very careful when using the lifts. Time your jumps properly otherwise you're in for a big fall, which will result in a large, life-threatening, loss of energy (you don't say – Neil).

Aliens on this level are placed very sparsely, but when they do turn up they mean business. Normally you can despatch with an Alien with one grenade from your rocket launcher, but because you're reaching the end of the level they take two hits before exploding into Alien soup. So, use your Motion Tracker and keep an eye out. Collect all the hostages, and then you can have a nice long rest on the lift up to the exit (just make sure you don't fall off on the way up).

Also, don't worry about the route down to the exit, because there aren't any Aliens hiding in here. Just run straight through to the next level.

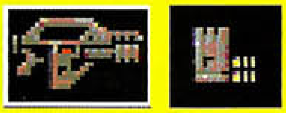


DON'T FORGET THAT KEY

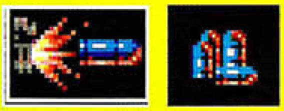
Still having trouble working out what all these strange lines, letters and symbols are? Then what *you* want to do is turn on page 72 for the key. What? Excuse me? Oh, you've already seen the key on page 72? Oh, well then the reason you're having trouble is taht you're a complete gimp. Sorry, but there it is.

ALL THOSE WEAPONS...

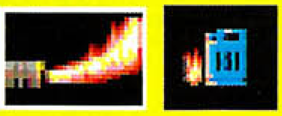
Each weapon has its strengths and weaknesses. Here we tell you about each weapon and show you the icon you need to pick up in the game if you're running short of ammunition. We also show you how to best use the firepower to your advantage. Have no mercy and blast that alien scum out of their world.



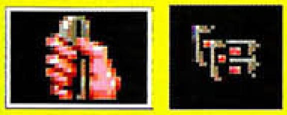
THE PULSE RIFLE: This weapon is the fastest, but you'll need to get seven or eight shots in with it to kill an ordinary alien. Unlike other weapons, however, you can aim this to the floor or upwards. Thankfully it's the most popular weapon, and there are plenty of chances to add ammo.



THE ROCKET LAUNCHER: This is the most powerful weapon you can possess – one shot will kill any alien. It is, however, very slow. You can overcome this by crouching down and holding down the fire button. This weapon is best saved for the end-of-level guardians.



THE FLAME THROWER: This weapon is powerful and fast, but it doesn't last that long, and the chance to pick up more ammo for it is very rare. It is the best weapon to use when you've run out of the two more spectacular ones above.



THE GRENADES: These have short fuses, but you can throw them quite a distance. Save them up for when you're in the tunnels and you have very little space in which to move. If there's an Alien ahead of you or down below you off screen, the grenades are very effective.

EXTRA ICONS

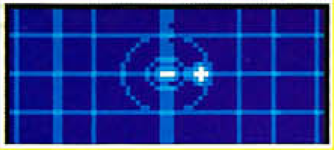
As well as the weapons, there are two other things you can pick up, and useful they are too.

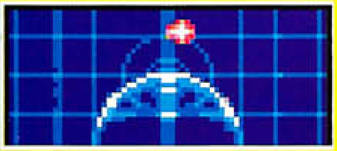
THE BATTERIES: These keep your Motion Tracker working, without which you really are up the creek.

THE MEDIC PACK: This restores your life, not completely but just a bit. Don't pick one up when you've got a lot of energy, 'cos you could need it later.

THE MOTION TRACKER

The Motion Tracker really is very useful, and if you don't use it regularly, then you really are asking for trouble. You let out a constant signal which detects any movement or body heat. This is useful for two reasons: you can detect Aliens before they come on screen (very useful) and you can also see where the hostages are.





When Aliens come in view of your Motion Tracker, you'll see a white blob. By noting where this blob is, you can also tell whether you need to crouch down in order to shoot it.

If you see a hostage, it'll show up as red. This is sometimes very useful if a hostage is off screen and you can't see a way to get to him. There is also sometimes a secret passage, which you can enter to get to him.

The Motion Tracker needs to be kept working by collecting the batteries. Don't wait until your Motion Tracker is flashing (because that means it's low on power) just collect batteries as you progress through the game, and you should be OK.

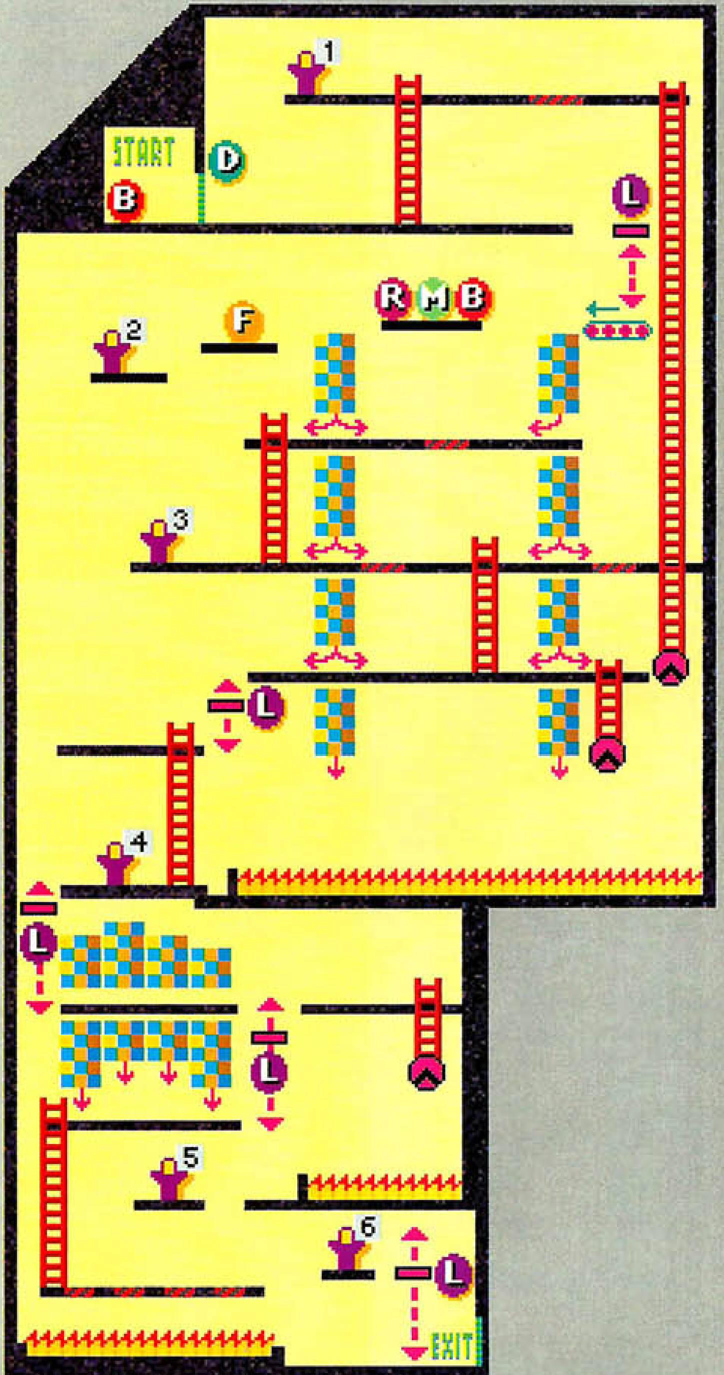
WELL DONE
YOU HAVE RID
THE PLANET
OF THE ALIEN
MENACE
AND WON
THE GAME

You've defeated the alien menace and succeeded in rescuing all the hostages. In the film Ripley actually dies, so what she's doing here is anybody's guess. Spooky or what?

SCENE 5 – STAGE 14: 6 HOSTAGES

You've really got to watch the clock on this one. The hostages are a great distance from each other, but you can do it, as long as you don't stop to admire the view. The first really tricky bit is the jump from the lift to the platform as you go to rescue the second hostage. If you do miss the jump, you'll have to backtrack, and that can take some time. Don't worry about the ladders that end in mid-air, because you won't fall off. You'll just have to climb back up, but you'll have wasted even more time.

If you pick up the two batteries (marked B on the map), you should have no trouble spotting any Aliens before they turn up. If you don't pick up the batteries, then you've only got yourself to blame. There aren't any other major problems in dealing with this level, and let's face it, if you've managed to get this far, then you really should be able to handle whatever this level has got in store. Just wait until you see the next one though – it really is tough.



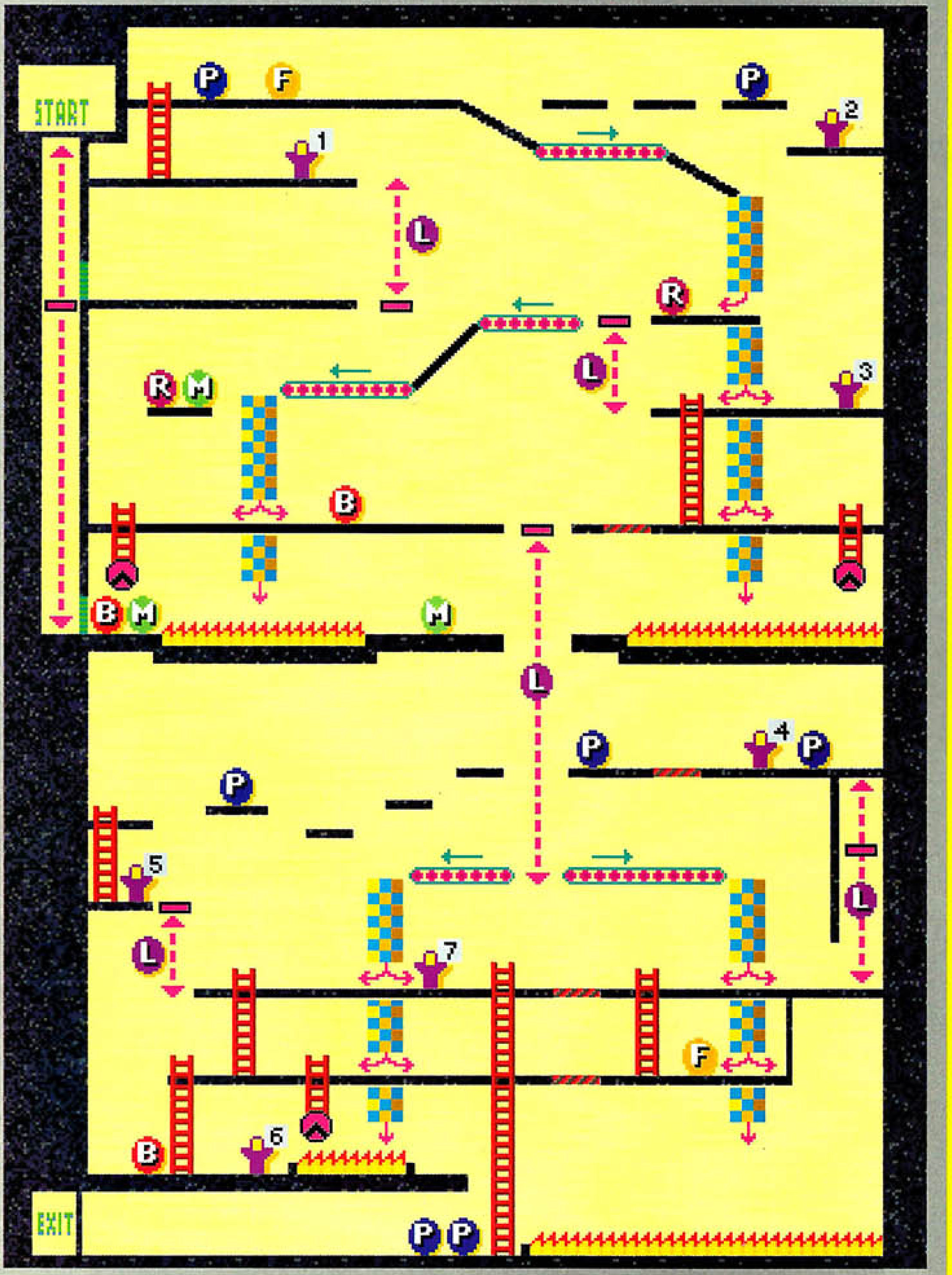
RIP 'N' TIP

SCENE 5 – STAGE 15: 7 HOSTAGES

This is the last hostage level of the game. There are awkward jumps, dodgy platforms, and loads of Aliens just waiting to jump out at you. The level is well spaced out, so be careful with your jumps. If you fall, you'll either land on a moving platform (bad news) or you'll fall a great distance and lose a lot of energy. The falling chutes can also be dangerous. When walking towards the exit, watch out for the three Aliens, which jump out of the ground. If you're low on energy, these suckers could quite easily kill you.

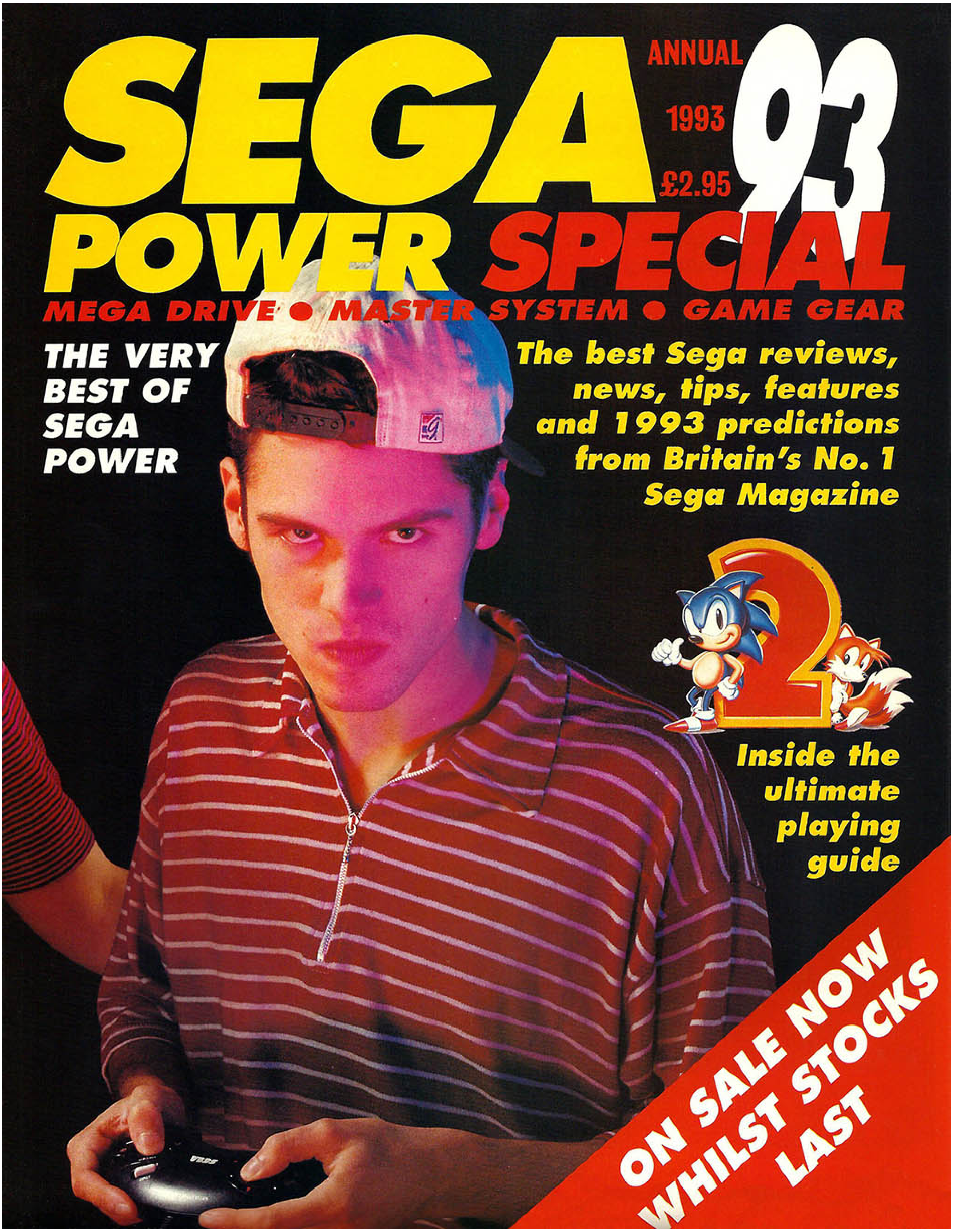
There are two guardians on this level and they are tough. The grenade launcher is by far the best weapon with which to attack them. Fall from the ledge you're standing on and stay there. Crouch, and wait for the first Alien to jump up to you. Crouching down and pressing button A makes you fire faster, so you can stay where you are. Stay here until you've killed the first guardian. When he's dead, jump down off to the right and stand in the corner. Do the same as before to kill guardian two, then run to the exit, which is in the top right-hand corner. You can use the lift.

Well done, you've now finished the game.



THAT KEY IN FULL...

	Hostage: Believe it or not, you rescue these
B	**Battery: Keeps your Motion Tracker working**
D	**Door: Blow it up or use the console to open it**
F	**Flame Thrower ammo: Very useful indeed**
L	**Lift: Check out where it goes and if you need to use it**
M	**Medic Pack: Restores some of your energy**
P	**Pulse Rifle ammo: For a very useful weapon**
R	**Rocket Launcher ammo: For your most powerful weapon**
◆	**Alien Eggs: Don't get too close, or a face-hugger will jump out**
↶	**Secret passage: Jump through this**
➜	**Secret passage: Jump through this**
┆	**Exit: Or even an entrance for that matter**
▬	**A lift: Use it**
▨	**A falling piece of platform: Very nasty**
ʌʌʌʌ	**Fire: Don't step (or fall) on it**
←	**A moving platform: The arrow points in the direction it moves**
☰	**Ladder: Avoid the ladders which don't reach the platform below. You can't die, but you will lose time**
▦	**Falling chute: The distance you fall determines how much energy you lose**
▲	**A dead end on the end of a ladder**
↔	**Another falling chute: You can decide on the direction in which you exit this chute. Just hold down the pad for the direction you want**



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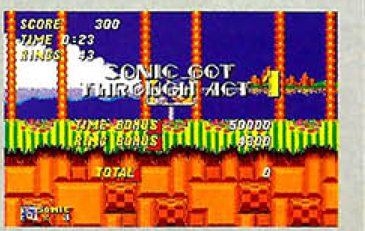
ARENA

It's ARENA time again, which means it's time to give your poor down-trodden Mega Drive games a new lease of life with some weird challenges and special secrets

WACKY CHALLENGES

It's official, people are rising to these challenges. Yes, one reader recently made the startling admission that he attempted the *Columns* challenge which appeared in issue two of MEGA. He actually played the game for more than five hours and did, indeed, attain a score in excess of 11,000,000 points. Assuming then that there are many more readers where this one came from, ARENA now offers six more mindless challenges.



① SONIC 2

OK, here goes. It's been out for only a short while, but you've all got a copy (yes, even you at the back). Try to finish Emerald Hill Zone act one in 23 seconds or less. There's only one way to do it, and we're not going to tell you what it is. If you do manage it, please *don't* write in telling us about it. Just pat yourself on the back in the knowledge that, like Paul Mellerick, you're a *Sonic 2* god.

② CRUE BALL

Score as many points as you can in five minutes. We'll start the ball rolling by saying that 5,000,000 is possible. Now see how your score compares to this.

③ DRAGON'S FURY

We'll do exactly the same here as with *Crue Ball*. Start the game as normal and try to score more than 3,000,000 points in five minutes. This is an average score, and if you know how to do the special 2,000,000 shot from the off, you should have no trouble.

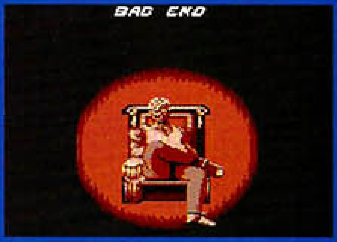
SEGA SECRETS

Here we go again with more surprises about somebody's favourite Mega Drive game.

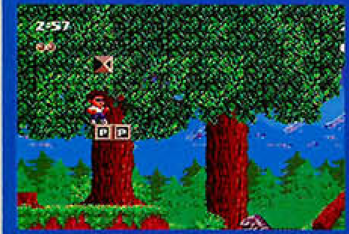
① STREETS OF RAGE

We've been rumbled. In issue one we told you how to get the bad ending in *Streets of Rage*. Eagle-eyed *Tom Ackerley*, however, spotted that we did it the long way round. What we should have said is what follows.

When both players get to the boss and he asks if either of them want to be his right-hand man, one player should say yes and the other should say no. Then the players have to fight each other. Whoever is left standing is asked the same question again by Mr Big, and that player should say no and then fight it out with him. Beat him, and you become the boss.



And here you go... Here's the screenshot to prove that the bad ending really does exist. Oh, and listen out for the evil laugh the boss emits at the end



Stand here and hit the blocks. Then jump over the well to skip through the level and improve your time

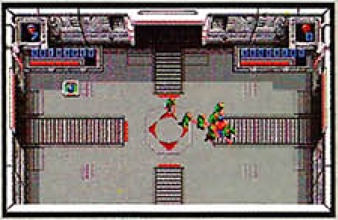
② KID CHAMELEON

This is a sort of a cross between a challenge and a secret, which has been sent in by an anonymous reader (if you're going to send stuff in, please include your name).

On the Blue Lake Woods II level there are hidden blocks on top of the prize block right at the start. Jump on the prize block to reveal them. Hit them again and they'll make a hole in the wall by the well, so now you don't have to fall down. You can then skip most of the level, and if you're quick enough, you can even get a speed bonus to boost your score.

④ SMASH TV

Yes, MEGA gave the above game a right kicking in issue one of the magazine, and rightly so. Still, here is a fun challenge for anybody who is sad enough to have bought the game.



Start the game as normal and play in one-player mode. Now see how long you can stay alive, not throughout the entire game, but just for your first life. We've managed to survive for four seconds, but that's probably because we don't like the game, and furthermore because we're crap.

⑤ TERMINATOR

This challenge comes from a reader. *David Howe* from Denton in Manchester sent this one in, and for his special efforts he wins himself a secret prize. Well done David.

Everybody says how easy *Terminator* is, so to spruce it up a bit David has offered us this challenge. Play the game on hard level, but collect only six bombs. Detonate two bombs so that you're left carrying four. Now get through the level without picking up any more bombs. Then blow up the reactor and get out. Oh and by the way, you can only use grenades; you're not allowed to pick up the gun. David has done it with six seconds left on the clock. See if you can do it any quicker, or do it at all for that matter.

⑥ PGA TOUR GOLF

Neil's contribution to this month's challenges is this one. Try to get around the Sawgrass course using only a one wood and a putter. For some strange reason Neil thinks this is funny, but then he's always been a bit strange. Ⓜ

YOUR SECRET'S SAFE WITH US

If you've discovered something about your favourite Mega Drive game that the rest of the gameplaying world might not know, then let them know through MEGA.

You never know, you could be the winner of next month's mystery prize.

Send your secrets to: ARENA, MEGA, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

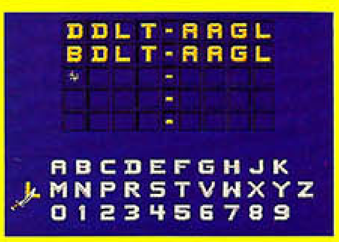
CRAZY CODES

Fancy winning a cart of your choice? Of course you do. Well, if you own a Game Genie, you're half way there. All you have to do now is get your brain in gear.

Those guys at Hornby Hobbies have come up with a really good competition to find the best Genie hackers in the country.

All you need to do is find (using your own initiative) a Game Genie code that does something amazing to the game.

So get your grey matter working and send in those codes. And don't forget that the sender of the best (in our opinion) crazy code wins a cart of their choice. Here's an example of the sort of thing we're after.



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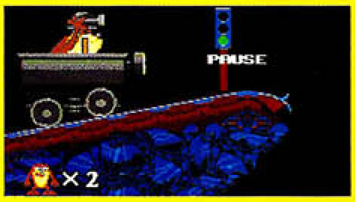
GIVE US A LIFT MATE?

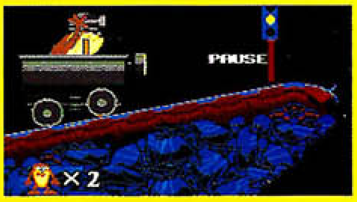
Q Please could you help me? I am stuck on *Taz-Mania*. How do I get through the minecart section? Every time I try, I hit a wall. Please tell me what I need to do?
Dave Sheppard, Portsmouth

A The problem with the minecart section is knowing when to accelerate and when to put on the brakes. Just before each jump, you'll see a set of traffic lights. When they're on green, it means you can accelerate over the gap. When the lights are on amber, it means you have to put on the brakes to fall down – don't accelerate into a wall like you're doing at the moment.

Take each jump as follows:
Jump one – Speed up
Jump two – Speed up
Jump three – Speed up
Jump four – Brake
Jump five – Brake
Jump six – Speed Up



With the light on green you can put the pedal to the metal and fly over the gap, onto the next platform



But if the light is orange, slow down otherwise you'll end up flying into six inches of timber

AH SO MASTER

Q Could you please give me some tips, or preferably cheats, for the game *Budokan*. I've recently bought it and I just keep on dying in match nine. Can you help me?
Aydin Sheibani, Bath

A As far as I know (and believe me I've tried to find out) there aren't any cheats for the game. The best advice I can offer is to save up your best attack for match nine. That's it I'm afraid, but it should help you get though this particular level.

I SPIT ON YOU

Q Can you please give me some advice on how to beat the bosses on the last level of *Toki: Going Ape Spit*? The game's driving me crazy.
D Mahon, Glasgow

A Stark is the first boss on this level, but he's the same guy as the boss on level eight and so he can be beaten in the same way. The last (last) boss called Membrane, however, is a whole new kettle of fish

Shoot him then wait for his head to bob. Then crawl underneath him and shoot again. He'll fly left and may even release some power-ups. As he goes left, jump and shoot him from behind. When he comes back to the right, crawl left to get any power-ups he may have dropped. Keep repeating this sequence until you eventually finish him off.

RIDE THE WAVE, MAN

Q Can you give me any tips for the surfing on *California Games*? I saw your advice for the BMX course in issue two and hope you can give me some help too.
Glyn Tranter, Jersey

A Always ready to help, that's me. The most important thing to remember about the surfing is that when you perform a jump, the angle at which you leave the wave must be the same as when you come back down. So if you jump straight up and do a turn, you must make sure you land straight down on the water. Once you've sussed out how to do this, concentrate on hitting the balls and maybe even spend some time underwater.

Another little tip is to ride off to the beach when the timer reaches 0:00. If you don't, you fall off and that counts as a fall, giving you less points.

YET MORE *IMMORTAL*

Q Please could you tell me how to get past the dragon on level eight of *The Immortal*. I've tried all of the blink and statue spells, but they run out and I get killed.
J Lewis, Stroud

SECRET SONIC

Q Could you please help me with a few problems I'm having with *Sonic the Hedgehog*? I've been told that in some of the zones there are secret worlds Sonic can enter. Can you tell me whether or not this is true? If it is, I would be grateful if you would tell me which zones they're in, and how to get into them, as I haven't got the foggiest.

I believe I've solved every other problem in *Sonic* except for this one. So if you can help, I'd be grateful.
Mr A Irwin, Barnsley

A Er, I think you're talking about the secret stages in the game, which enable Sonic to get hold of the chaos emeralds. If you're not talking about this, then I haven't got a clue what you're going on about.

To enter a secret stage, Sonic must finish the level carrying more than 50 rings. If he does have his quota of rings, then you'll see a big golden ring. Jump through it and into the special stage.

These stages are mazes, which you have to work your way through to collect the emerald. It sounds easy, but when the maze is moving round 360 degrees and there are exits all around you, it becomes a bit harder. Collect all six emeralds and when you beat Robotnik you'll see the proper end sequence. I won't tell you what Sonic does, but let's just say that it's well worth collecting all the emeralds.

SCORE 11700
TIME 0:28
RINGS 55
10000
1000
SONIC × 3

See that very big, gold ring on the right-hand side of the screen? Well, jump through it then. Oh, you already have

A What you're doing is right, it just takes timing and persistence. Use all six Blink spells straightaway to avoid getting burnt. Now use the Fire protection spell. Use the Amulet, and Mordimar appears. Use three statue spells to avoid the lightning. Use the Sonic spell, then the Statue spell again to avoid the lightening strikes and the Grim Reaper. When Mordimar's finished talking, cast the Magnetic spell. Watch Mordimar fry and you're rescued by a goblin.

DOWN IN SUBTERRANEAN CITY

Q Please can you help me? Is there a hint book for *Super Hydlide*? I have been stuck in Subterranean City for weeks. I need to find and ID card and would appreciate any other hints. Please help me.
Jean Fielden, Todmorden, Lancs

A Well, the reason you can't find the ID card in Subterranean City is that it isn't there. Follow these instructions and I'll show you how to get out of Subterranean City and find the ID Card, then you can go from there. Deposit money at the bank to get the Bank Book. Find the guard in the lower left-hand corner of the town. Walk up one screen and to the left, where the rocks are. Now find the secret entrance to the open area. Search the chest in the upper left-hand corner twice, and you'll now be in the Cave Of The Dead. Follow the cave two screens up and two left and take the top exit. Follow the pathways and find the Dragon. Each head needs about eight to ten hits.

When you've killed him, a new room will appear. In that room is a chest with the Fang in it. Open the chest with Magic or you'll be poisoned. Go to the 198th floor of the Tower of Babel and walk through the middle window to Heavenly City. Find the Water Palace and find the sleeping chamber. On the left-hand side of the chamber press button B to find the ID Card.

YO SURFER DUDE, HOW YOU DOING?

Q Before I start, let me explain. I know *Greendog* is a pile of rubbish, but someone bought it for me as a present and you don't look a gift horse in the mouth, do you? Anyway, onto my problem. I've got through to the Skeleton, but I can't seem to work out how to kill him. What's the proper way?
M Hodgkinson, Stockport

A Not only is *Greendog* a bit naff, it's also decidedly easy. I'm surprised, therefore, that you're having trouble with this. As soon as the Skeleton appears, fire your discs at him and move left and right to avoid him. When he breaks in half, go to the left-hand side of the screen and hit him. Keep going and he should die very quickly.

POP GOES DRACULA

Q Two weeks ago I bought *Quackshot*. I've got as far as Dracula's castle, but I can't kill the count. I waste all my popcorn on killing the bats, but when I run out of ammo they come and kill me. Please give me tips and a cheat if there is one.
Keith Potter, Oxford

A The secret to killing Dracula is to fire your popcorn when his cape is open and the bats fly out. If you time your first shot correctly, you should be able to get the four bats and still hit Dracula. If not, just fire again straight after your first shot. Repeat this a few times and you'll get the real treasure map.

LOST IN A FANTASY

Q Being new to RPGs, and having only recently bought *Phantasy Star II*, I need your help. After many hours of playing, I cannot find any towns other than Paseo and Arima (destroyed by scoundrels). Am I being exceptionally thick and missing something? Please help!
Mrs Karen Grimmer, Lowestoft, Suffolk

A Er, yes, you are. No, sorry. The secret to finding more towns is exploring. Go north from Paseo Two to the boundary, and you'll see a small bridge. Walk across it and keep going north. You'll eventually come across the Northbridge. Walk through it and you can explore that area. Keep searching, and you'll find more towns than you ever dreamt of. I could tell you more about the game, but that would spoil your enjoyment, wouldn't it? Good luck

STRIKE OUT THE EMBASSY

Q I have a real problem with *Desert Strike*. The last stages of campaign three (Embassy City) – Capture Enemy Ambassador and Liberate Embassy – are driving me insane. I get there with all lives intact only to be wiped out by enemy firepower, which is so hard to destroy. Please can you give me any tips, cheats or advice to help me reach the very last campaign.
P Lanckham, Clipstone, Mansfield

A Right, the first thing you need to know about the embassy is that it's guarded by radar. Take this out first, or the artillery will know you're coming. Once you've taken that out, fly by in a circular pattern and take out each piece one by one. Then catch the ambassador.

That's the easy bit out of the way. Land your co-pilot by the embassy and as he enters, fly off. Come back and take out each of the ZSUs which are waiting for you. Blow up the doors by the bus and escort it out. Fly ahead and check out what's coming. Don't fly too far off though, because the bus is fragile and can only take a few hits.

HE IS WHAT?

Q HELP! How do you defeat the level three boss on *Eswat?* I just can't seem to kill him no matter what I do. Also, are there any cheats for extra lives or level jumps?
Craig Drew, Doncaster

A The secret to beating this hard boss is jumping. He's pretty useless really, because the only thing which hurts you is the shield-type thing he fires at you. Get your timing right and jump over it (using your jet pack), fall down, fire at him and then jump back over it. After a couple of hits, fire your "Fire" weapon (if you're carrying one) when the shield is off screen. If you've already hit him enough times, he should die right there and then.

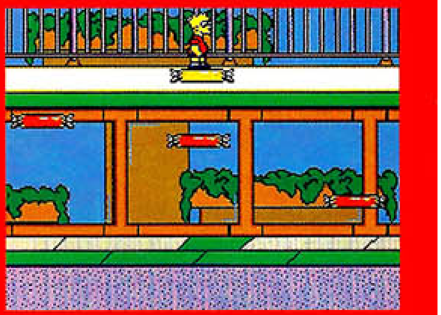
WHO SAID CHEATS NEVER GAIN GROUND?

Q Can you help me defeat the last boss on level 50 of *Gain Ground*? I've used the level-select cheat to get here, but it's really hard and I just can't do it. What's the best way?
Jason Knight, Colchester

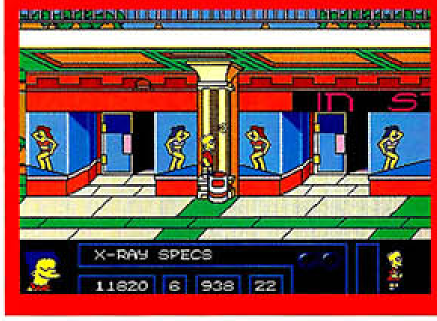
➔ Turn Over

LOST IN SPACE MUTANTS

Q Can you please help me with *Bart Vs The Space Mutants*. I can get to the second level, where the moving platforms are, and I can get on to the fourth one, but then I don't know what to do. If I try to jump onto the circular thing, I either miss it, or fall straight through. Could you please help me and could you also tell me if there are any cheats for level two of the game?
Dean Mitchell, Slough



Jump on the platform three times and then you'll sail across the quicksand – easy really



A Ooh, aren't you the silly one? You've actually just gone past one of the little tricks hidden in the game. Go and stand on the second platform and jump up three times. You'll now be transported over the pit to safety. Another tip for the level is to jump up on the bins which lie around the level. Jump on top of them and you'll reveal a coin.

If you're in need of some money, jump on every bin to see if some money appears

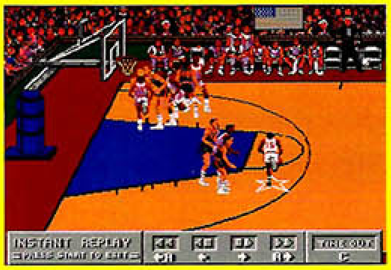
A DREAM TEAM SOLUTION

Q Can you give me any advice (preferably cheats) on playing *Team USA Basketball*. I'm not very good at scoring either from under the basket or outside the three point line. If you can give me some pointers, I'd be very grateful.
Larry Smith, Newcastle

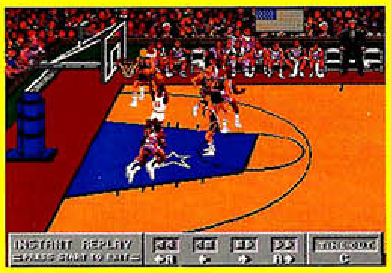
A Well Larry, step into my basketball clinic and check out the following. Each player is better in one position than in any other. Some are deadly accurate with the three pointers, others can duck and dive all over the place.

One trick that you might like to use is the Shadow Play. Each player is shadowed by an opponent, making clear runs on the basket very difficult. Move down to the end of the court and then run up towards the basket. If you can time this right, your defender should run into another player, giving you a clear run. Press and hold down button A and two points will be yours.

Don't forget to check the stats of each player and find out who is best at the long-range shots. Use these only if you're far ahead or if you need to make up some points, because the risk is very high.



Once you've blocked off the defender, you can make your run straight up to the free throw line and then...



Hold down button A and perform your special move, which in this case is a backboard lay up. Well done, two points for you and your team

TIPS

A Well, I don't know if I should tell you really, what with you cheating and all, but I suppose I must. Weapon selection is important, but the homing missiles that the last boss fires are the most awkward things. Stand still, and just as the homing missile is about to hit, move in a small circle. Timing and plenty of practice pay off, and then you can work your way up the middle to defeat him.

POPULARITY BREEDS CHEATS

Q Can you give me any cheats or level codes for *Populous?* I'm actually quite good at the game, but I don't fancy playing it all the way through. Some higher level passwords would be nice, please.
Tim Smith, Newcastle

A Well, it's your lucky day today matey. There is a sort of level select for *Populous,* and it goes like this. Choose your level number, say 284 and enter the word BIT after it. To enter the numbers, you have to hold down button B and press Up or Down. Simple eh?

BLOW HIM UP, AND HE'LL BE BACK

Q I keep getting killed on the last level of *Terminator,* and there's nothing I can seem to do about it. I blow up the Terminator so he loses his legs, but then I can't get past him. If I don't blow him up, he comes back again. What do I have to do?
Max Anderson, Bedford

A You're actually doing the right thing, only in the wrong way. Termie can take five hits before he loses his legs, so you need to be careful. What you need to do is get in front of him and then let him follow you, because if he moves off screen, he'll reappear in front of you. Use this technique right to the end and you should be able to finish the game.

WORK YOUR WAY THROUGH THE STARS

Q Do you know anything about *Starflight?* I've played the game on and off for a few months, but I'm stuck trying to find the Crystal Orb. Can you tell me where it is and how to get it?
Simon Cooper, Kent

A Yes, I can. Go to system 132, 165 and orbit the planets in that system. Land, and when the map appears on screen, look for a flashing yellow cross. If you don't see one, land on another planet and try again until you find it.

MUTATIONS OF A RUBBISH GAME

Q Can you give me some advice on beating Mutoid Man, the first boss in *Smash TV?* I've tried several times, but he crushes me every time.
Gary McClain, Chelsea

A The thing with all the bosses is that you've got to collect the speed-up shoes very quickly or you're sunk. Once you've collected them, you can outrun his attack and get some shots in. Pick up any power-ups as quickly as you can and give him some stick.

I MUST BE MAD TO PLAY THIS

Q Can you give me some tips on how to beat the Mad-Roid boss on *Atomic Runner?* I just can't figure out how to kill him. Where do I shoot and what tactics do I need?
Clive Nelson, Oxford

A The weakness with this boss is in his stomach, but it's very hard to hit. The trick here is to draw fire and dive underneath his arm while firing at him. The robot then splits up and you have to kill the eyeball to finish him off. Easy when you know how, huh?

TWIN (NO, NOT PEAKS) TIPS

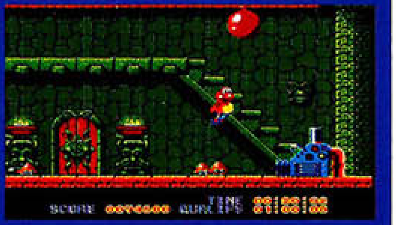
Q Can you help me with a game called *Twin Cobra?* I've played the game for a while, but I can't get very far. Do you know of any cheats, tactics or level selects that will allow me to get that bit further into the game or even finish it?
Jake Burton, Coventry

A Well this is your lucky day. We printed this tip in issue one of MEGA, so I think you must be a new reader. Anyway here it is. Start the game as normal then press Start to pause. Now press Up, Down, Right and Left. Press and hold down button A, then unpause. You should now be fully powered up, making things a lot easier.

However, if level selects are more your thing, try this on the title screen. When the helicopter lands, press Up, Down, Right and Left. Press start and select the level you want. The best thing about these tips is that you can use them both together. Why not start on level ten (the last one) with full power? Neat huh!

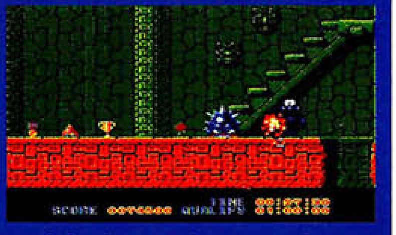
STUCK ON SHELL SHOOTING

Q I noticed your brilliant tips for *Olympic Gold* in issue one, and I was wondering if it would be possible for you to do the same thing for the *Aquatic Games: Starring James Pond and the Aquabats?* I'm OK on all the events (honest, I am) apart from the Shell Shooting. I've also been told that there is a bonus room above the play area. How do I get into it? Other than that, some general advice on how to score the most points would be nice.
Shaun Burrows, Doncaster



You've got one ball left to pop, leave it and move over to the right-hand side...

A Your wish is my command. Two things matter the most when trying to accumulate the highest possible score – the time and bonus points. If you're fast, you'll get loadsa bonus points and if you enter the secret room above the playing area by bouncing on the green blob at the right-hand side of the screen, you'll find more points. If you can get the bonus points above you and still do it in under one minute, you can maximize your points. Look at the screenshots to see how you go about it.

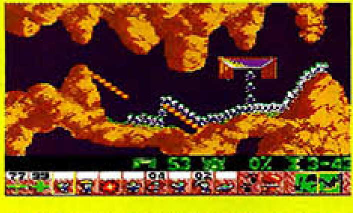


...wait for the green bouncer, and bounce up to the top. Watch your step though

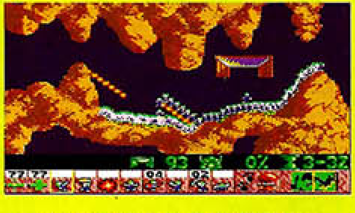
SHOW ME THE WAY TO GO HOME, I'M TIRED AND I WANT...

Q Can you help me please, because I'm having trouble with *Lemmings?* The level is 29 on Tricky. I don't want the code for the next level or anything, I just want to know how to do it. Can you give me some help, because I've spent several hours on it already?

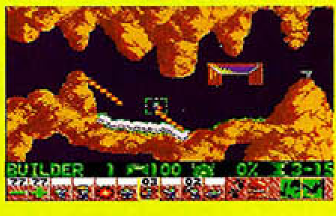
A Well, yes I can help you, but to *tell* you what to do would be very confusing, wouldn't it? Instead I'm going to show you how to do it stage by stage using screenshots. Aren't I kind to you?



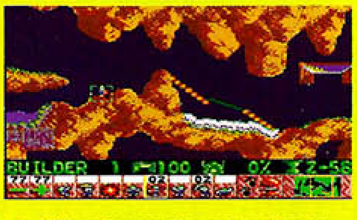
① Let your guys fall out, then speed up the release rate, because time is tight. You need to do this so that you can get one lemming on its own



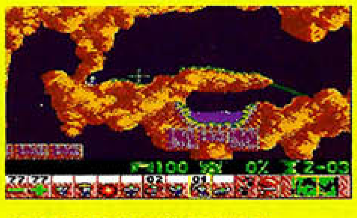
② Just before the last lemming comes out, slow the rate back down to 77. Wait for them and they'll walk up to the top



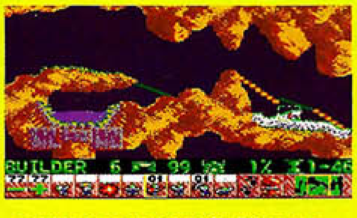
③ Let all the other lemmings fall down and get trapped, but when the last lemming is on the edge, build a bridge over the gap



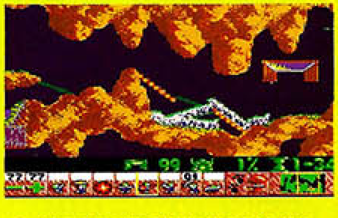
④ It'll walk over the gap and over the hill. You need to be precise here so be careful. Make a bridge as shown and over you go



⑤ Let this lemming carry on walking and, at the right moment, turn it into a digger. It'll dig towards the exit and fall down to safety



⑥ This is the tricky bit. Click on a lemming going right and make it a builder twice, this will make it build a bridge out of the pit



⑦ Then they'll all walk up to the top, back, over the two bridges, down the tunnel and then carry on right through to the exit

SO, YOU THINK YOU'RE A SIDE POCKET GOD, DO YOU?

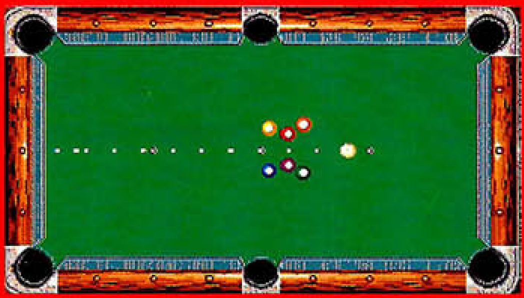
Q After reading your *Side Pocket* review in issue two of MEGA, I went out and bought a copy of the game. It's very good and I play it quite a lot. I was wondering, however, whether you could help me out on the trick shots, that let you move onto the next stage? They're very difficult and although I don't want to cheat or anything, I would like to know how to do them. Thank you in advance for helping me out.
Paul Pringle, Nottingham

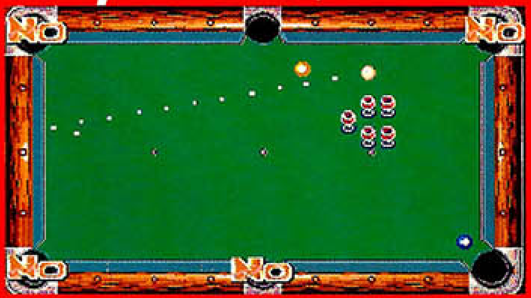
A After much sweating and hard work, I've managed to do all five trick shots and therefore have finished the one-player game. It is not easy to do and therefore not easy to explain in words. However, check out the screenshots in this box and we don't think you'll be disappointed.

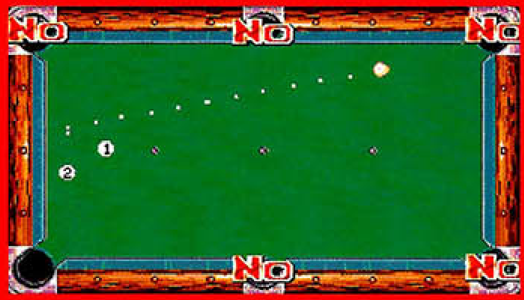
OK, let's get to it...

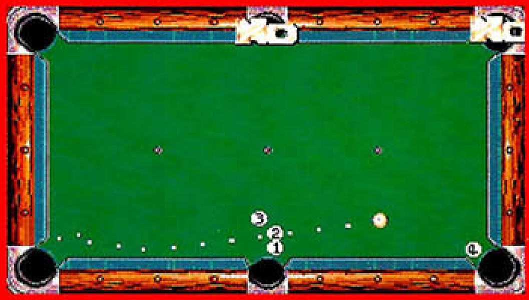
YOUR SCORE 5100Pts
TARGET SCORE 5000Pts
CHALLENGE SHOT

You've got enough points, but can you do the trick shot? Read on...


Stage 2: Las Vegas – Full power straight ahead with no English, and watch those six balls go flying in


Stage 3: San Francisco – Masse one and left, full power and use the set-up as shown above. Easy huh?


Stage 4: New York – Masse one and left again with full power. Then look at the screenshot


Stage 5: Atlantic City – Use maximum draw with full power. It's very tricky, but practice makes perfect

LET'S GET ALL ARTY FARTY

Q I recently bought my eight-year-old son a second-hand copy of *Art Alive,* because he likes drawing. Because the game is second hand it didn't come with any instructions, and we can't figure out how to save any pictures. Can you tell us how to do it, and where we can get hold of an instruction booklet as well?
Doug Richards, Frome

A Er, I don't know how to break this to you, but the game doesn't come with the ability to save pictures. The only way this is possible is by setting up your video recorder and taping the finished drawing. This is the main reason that the game wasn't well received. If you still want some instructions though, call Sega on 071 727 8070 and ask for Customer Services.

BOUNCY, BOUNCY, WHEEEEE!

Q Can you give me any general tips for *Arch Rivals?* Not on the fighting side of things (because I'm dirty enough at that already), but on scoring. I am especially interested in the three pointers. Also, who, in your opinion, is the best player in the game?
Martin McCloud, Liverpool

A Right, the best player is Vinnie. Basically, he's the best because he's a good all-rounder and that's what you need when there's only two people on the court. If you're looking for some tips on scoring, the best advice I can give you is to go for the three pointers.

Take your main player off screen and pass to the corners of the court. Try a shot from here and most of the time you'll be lucky enough to put one in.

RACING AHEAD OF THE FIELD

Q Can you give me some passwords and maybe even some general advice for *Ferrari Grand Prix?* Help in particular on the later levels such as Hungary and Monaco would be most appreciated. Thank you.
Stuart Roberts, Cambridge

A Well, seeing as you asked so nicely I will give you some passwords for the later levels.

For San Marino enter:
GKBWQ:GF63T
PZMGW:CBGTM
NQ6KS: 2CFJT

For the Monaco GP enter:
N6MRL: VDDZ1
FGRFH:4Q41Z
KLX6W:QKFMP

And finally, for Hungary enter:
DLQC3:QFZ3P
LDHQ6:21NTL
NBL1J:B6DQG

The only advice I can give you on these tracks is to take things carefully and slow down at the corners. This may sound like silly advice, but some of the corners are very sharp indeed.

Practice makes perfect, and once you've got to grips with each course, you won't have any trouble getting through to the end.

I AM THE GOD OF *HELLFIRE* AND I BRING YOU...

Q Can you give me some guidance on beating the level six boss on *Hellfire?* I believe it's the last one, so some real tips would be helpful.
Tim Vaughn, Gloucester

A Yes, you are indeed at the very end of the game, and as such you're up against a very tough boss. You'll have noticed that he fires lasers at you. These themselves are pretty easy to avoid and the only real problem you might have is attaining hits to his head (the only place you can really hurt him). Fly above him at every opportunity and fire downwards, then move quickly out of the way and avoid the laser. Repeat this process several time and you've finished the game. Now sit back and watch the really nice animation of the ship on the end sequence.

WHY DON'T THESE COPS STAY DOWN?

Q Can you tell me how to kill the police in *Terminator?* I've tried everything from setting bombs to standing there firing rounds into them. What do I have to do?
Emma Hadley, Southampton

A Er well, if you read the manual, you'll see that you can't actually kill them. The people behind the film said that because Kyle Reece was a good guy, he wasn't allowed to kill the police. So the game doesn't let you. You've got to hit them four times and then, while they're lying on the floor, run past them. Now get on with it.

BUILD UP YOUR BOUNCING ABILITY

Q Do you know of any tips on scoring in *David Robinson's Supreme Court Basketball,* because I'm getting beaten quite convincingly by my friends? Some help would be very nice.
Paul Toone, Washington

A Aren't you the lucky one? I didn't think there was a tip for this game, but then I found one just before we went to print. Run down the side of the court and stand so that the basket is vertically in front of you. Shoot, and more often than not (about nine times out of ten) it'll go in. There you go, that should help stuff your mates. Ⓜ

KEEP WRITING IN TO THE MEGA MEDIC!

If you have any sort of question or problem about any Mega Drive game, and you'd like to read a solution (and indeed, get your name in print) in a future edition of MEGA, then send it to the MEGA MEDIC: MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

Remember that Paul Mellerick is a Mega Drive tips God, so if anyone can help you out, MEGA Mellerick can...

This month's Top 100 is looking even bigger and sexier than ever before. Not only have we slotted the latest releases into the system (*John Madden Football '93* has stormed straight into the number one position – disagree if you dare), added a new batch of readers' ads and included three more reviews of classic games which are still well worth a look, but we have also compiled a complete list of every game which has ever appeared on the Mega Drive. Wow, we really know how to blow your mind, don't we?

1. JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '93 (INC. MADDEN AND MADDEN '92)

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

43 YARD PUNT
#27 RETURNS
41 YARD GAIN

The third version of the best game on your Mega Drive and it's been improved upon again. If you're fed up with playing through the normal teams, try your hand against the best teams of all time. There are eight Superbowl winning sides to play against and you can even enter the best of the best playoff to see who is ultimately the best.

John Madden Football '93 has all the playability of the other two versions and more. One word of caution though: if you own either the original *John Madden American Football* or *John Madden '92*, don't buy this version expecting a whole new game.

MEGA says: The best just got better, but not by that much.

TO SWAP: *John Madden '92*
Swap plus money – 0302 739655
FOR SALE: *John Madden '92*
£12 – 0704 78560
£15 – 071 834 4644
£20/Swap – 0297 60232
£24 – 081 504 8614
FOR SALE: *John Madden '93*
(USA) £25 – 061 330 1862

2. SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

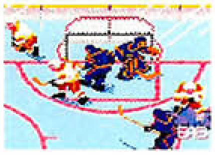
Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

Hey, you want top grade video game entertainment? Then you got it. Fast, smooth colourful graphics, top sound and playability that would make most game programmers eyes water. Even if you do finish it, you've still got the two-player races and all those time challenges. What is the fastest time possible for the Emerald Hill Zone act 1?

MEGA says: You might find it too easy to finish, but it does leave the original sobbing in a damp corner.

3. NHLPA HOCKEY (INC. EA HOCKEY)

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



Just as *John Madden '93* remained firmly fixed to its predecessor's roots, so does this. The new version is just as much a classic as the original, but there aren't enough new features to earn the game promotion to the number one spot.

The top-down scrolling viewpoint still works beautifully, and the gameplay is as perfect as you could ever hope for it to be. Mind you, just like in the real thing, the best bit is when the gloves come off and the punch-ups start. Not as involved as *John Madden Football*, and the naïve or short-sighted player will tell you that scoring's more down to luck than skill, but for nerve-tingling tension that's absolutely second-to-none you still won't find a pulse-raiser much better (or tougher to master) than this.

MEGA says: Even better than the original (MEGA rated it 92% – it would have got more if it hadn't been a sequel). *NHLPA Hockey* is bigger, better and bloodier than its older brother, and it truly kicks. It is an absolutely fantastic game, which no Mega Drive owner should find himself/herself without.

TO SWAP: *NHLPA Hockey*
Swap plus money – 0302 739655
TO SWAP: *EA Hockey*
Swap plus money – 0302 739655

4. HELLFIRE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Hellfire, the only serious competition to *Aero Blasters* in the space-blast department, is number one in a different field. If the Mega Drive's ever seen a more accurate coin-op conversion than this, we'd like to know what it is. A clever and imaginative shoot-'em-up, *Hellfire* makes you think before you zap with four switchable weapon systems which, if you're going to make any progress through the game, have to be employed with expert speed and accuracy. The end-of-level bosses have had a bit more thought put into their design than the usual "find the weak spot and sit and pummel it for a couple of minutes" routine, and the graphics change enough from level to level to make it a real joy to discover what's in store in each new stage. You get a lot of continues, which makes it a bit easy to complete, but hey – nothing's perfect.

MEGA says: Great stuff, although it pales a bit in the frenetic action department when you put it alongside *Aero Blasters*. If you find that one a bit too demanding, though, this'll be right up your street. *Hellfire* really is a superb game.

FOR SALE: *Hellfire*
(Jap) £20 – 0993 844434

5. SUPER MONACO GP 2 (INC. SUPER MONACO GP)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99

Right, we've had the sports game, the platform game and the shoot-'em-up. What's missing? Of course, the driving game! *Super Monaco GP* (Incidentally, does anyone else remember Sega's original Monaco GP arcade game? Nope, thought not.) was the most popular driving coin-op before *Out Run*, and the staggering graphics were thought by many to be completely impossible to simulate on a Mega Drive. And, indeed, they were, but disappointment turned to joy within seconds of loading this cart into the slot – the graphics may only be alright, but the gameplay is astonishing. Superb, definable control, high-speed adrenaline-pumping driving, *and* a bit of strategic depth to keep things interesting after the first few days.

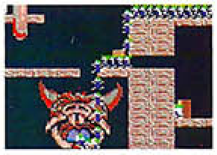
The sequel improves significantly on the earlier game (without really changing it very much) especially in the area of car handling (thanks to input from Ayrton Senna), but with something that started off as fab as *Super Monaco GP*, that's still just window-dressing. Essential stuff.

MEGA says: The competition isn't really up to much as far as Formula One racing goes (yet), but even so, you'd have to go a long, long way to come up with a better driving game than this one. (And you'll probably have to wait a long, long time for someone to write one, anyway).

TO SWAP: *Super Monaco GP2*
081 578 2671
Swap plus money – 0302 739655
FOR SALE: *Super Monaco GP*
£15 – 071 834 4644

6. LEMMINGS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA



180 one-player levels, 20 two-player levels and addictive puzzling gameplay that's going to keep you stumped for an incredibly long time. Excellent use of a password system and a stunningly easy control system make this a must for all gamers.

MEGA says: It's addictive, brain teasing and we can't get Neil away from it. What more of a recommendation do you need?

WANTED: *Lemmings*
0535 601065

7. STREETS OF RAGE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

If every third Mega Drive game that gets released is a beat-'em-up, how come hardly any of them are any good? Thankfully, that's a question that *Streets Of Rage* doesn't have to answer, because it's great stuff – if it were only tougher to beat!

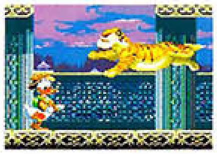
Lovely backdrops, loads of athletic fighting moves, excellent two-player action (two players can interact with each other to pull off some frightening moves) and an imaginative approach to special weapons (the police car firing rockets from half-a-dozen screens back and still managing to pick off the bad guys with pinpoint accuracy is brilliant!) all go together to make this the most challenging and rewarding game the Mega Drive has to offer in the genre.

MEGA says: If you want a beat-'em-up, there is no alternative (well, except *Golden Axe 2*).

TO SWAP: *Streets Of Rage*
Swap plus money – 0302 739655

8. QUACKSHOT

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



Yes, it's another platformer; yes, it's another Disney licence; yes, it's a bit of a clone of *Mickey Mouse's Castle Of Illusion*; but none of that matters one little bit. Why not? Because *Quackshot* (even labouring under the burden of starring Donald "can't even speak properly" Duck) is excellent fun. This is the game that *Fantasia* *should* have been. It looks lush, it sounds lovely, and it's action-quacked (I'm really sorry about that) from start to finish.

MEGA says: Are you deaf? We said get it!

FOR SALE: *Quackshot*
£20 – 0695 633032
£20/Swap – 0297 60232

9. SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

It's quite possible that this is the most famous video game ever – it's certainly the one which, more than any other, lifted console games out of the spotty schoolboy ghetto and into the real-world limelight where they truly belong.

Yeah, it's a bit easy to finish but why be selfish? Isn't it nice that everyone gets a chance to see the end sequence for once? Anyway, there's so much hidden away in *Sonic The Hedgehog* and it's just so much damn fun to play that you'll never get bored with it, no matter how many times you whip nasty ol' Dr Robotnik's ass. And, if you don't still get a buzz when Sonic loops the loop at maximum speed with his super-fast boots on, get someone to check your pulse immediately – you may be dead.

MEGA says: Still the most technically stunning game the Mega Drive's ever seen, and the standard-bearer of a whole new era of video games. Completely amazing, completely brilliant.

TO SWAP: *Sonic*
Swap – 0633 850885
Swap – 081 578 2671
Swap – 0742 484406
Swap plus £3 – 0522 510967
FOR SALE: *Sonic*
£20/Swap – 0297 60232
£20 – 071 834 4644
Offers/Swap – 0535 601065
£20 o.n.o. – 0244 534219

10. ROAD RASH

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

So you've played *Super Monaco 2* to death, huh? You're after more racing, but something with a bit more of an edge to it, right? You want *Road Rash*, mate. It might sound like a nasty disease that you get after spending too long in a sweaty boiler suit, but, in fact, *Road Rash* is a brilliant motorbike racing game with a difference – you don't just get to overtake your competitors, you get to smash their heads in as well!

Hurtle down five dangerous courses at suicidal speeds (avoiding traffic and speed cops as well as other racers), make your fortune only to spend it all on new and ever-faster bikes, and wear your knuckles down by riding alongside your enemies and punching them in the face. There are loads of bikes, loads of violence and five whole stages – this game really has got the lot.

MEGA says: Superbly atmospheric full-throttle romp that's arguably even more entertaining than *Super Monaco GP*, if a little less sophisticated. Whatever the arguments, though, there's no denying that *Road Rash* is a true classic. We advise you not to miss this one.

TO SWAP: *Road Rash*
0606 852081
FOR SALE: *Road Rash*
£20/Swap – 0297 60232

11. RAINBOW ISLANDS

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Already hailed as the best 16-bit computer game of all time, *Rainbow Islands* has come to the Mega Drive and, miraculously, has got even better. The impossibly addictive platform action is the same as ever, the amazingly cute graphics are as sweet as ever, and the devilish, fiendishly hidden bonuses are as devilish and fiendishly hidden as ever. And with Mega Drive's *Rainbow Islands* you get a whole extra game on top! Well, it's more of a variation than a completely different game, true, but the extra, harder version extends the life of a game which was already practically immortal, and makes it just about the best value-for-money investment you'll ever see in an arcade platformer. At once incredibly simple and deeply complex, *Rainbow Islands* is right up there at the peak of the platform programmer's art.

MEGA says: If you've got a UK Mega Drive, this game alone makes it worth buying a Jap adaptor. Seriously beautiful, incomparably playable and unbeatably addictive.

12. PGA TOUR GOLF

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

There isn't a lot of competition in the golf field (shouldn't that be "course"? – Ed) when it comes to Mega Drive games, but what there is, *PGA Tour* is miles ahead of. The graphics are exquisite, the control is practically perfect, loads of people can play at once, it's got every option you could possibly want, and there's even a battery back-up. Nothing else so far captures that elusive "wandering around a beautiful landscape pausing occasionally to batter a harmless little ball around with a series of big sticks" atmosphere as well as *PGA* does. *World Class Leaderboard* comes close, but if golf is your bag (ho, ho), then this is your game.

MEGA says: This is the best golf game there is, and also the best Mega Drive game for more than two players. Why not club together (sorry) with your mates and buy it?

FOR SALE: *PGA Tour Golf*
£20/Swap – 0297 60232

13. SWORD OF VERMILLION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

Try not to be put off by the fearsome price tag on this one, because if you're into all that RPG hacking 'n' slashing malarkey, this'll be money well spent.

Sword Of Vermillion is probably the best game of the type on the Mega Drive and, in a market that's becoming more crowded by the day, that's no mean feat. This game is big, slick and sexy.

MEGA says: Look, you're as well to spend £50 on something excellent as waste £35 on something average, aren't you? Quality costs (and in this case it certainly does), but it's usually worth it.

FOR SALE: *Sword Of Vermillion*
£25 – 071 834 4644

14. PHANTASY STAR 3

Publisher: SEGA
Price: £49.99

A completely huge RPG, with loads of different worlds and a whole gang of characters to control. Try to complete *this* one in a night without using the battery back-up...

MEGA says: It's a lot of money but in terms of hours of fun per pound, you'll be hard pushed to beat this one.

15. AERO BLASTERS

Publisher: Kemco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

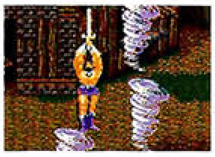
If you're one of the not-very-many people who've played this brilliant game in the arcades (under the name of *Air Busters* more likely than not), you won't need telling what a fantastic, all-action, exciting and varied blastathon it is. If you aren't one of *those people*, then be told *right now – Aero Blasters* is the fastest, meanest, sexiest, joypad-grippingliest, sweatiest shoot-'em-up there's ever been.

It is more impressive-looking than most Mega Drive zappers, more innovatively designed, better off in the end-of-level boss department, and it has frighteningly fast and dangerous tunnel sections, which provide the biggest wide-eyed thrills you'll ever get from your console.

MEGA says: One of the best Mega Drive shoot-'em-ups ever without the tiniest shadow of a doubt. Your game collection shouldn't be without it.

16. GOLDEN AXE 2 (INC. GOLDEN AXE)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



What's that? You want some beat-'em-ups? OK, here's a real golden oldie (well, a game with deep roots anyway). If you're one of those strange people who likes nothing better than to wander in straight lines through strange lands kicking lumps out of the previously-happy inhabitants, then you'll probably like *Golden Axe*.

The sequel did nothing to alter the linear gameplay (Ax, Gillius or Tyris still start heading right and just keep going) and the two games are to all intents and purposes identical. It's still a simple walk-along-and-hit-fire-a-lot-whenever-you-meet-anyone kind of affair, but the execution is lovely with impressively muscular sprites and some great attacking moves. The five big levels will keep you entertained for quite a while and, while it's all very repetitive, the scenery is pretty enough to make you want to keep at it until you see the end. Whether you'll want to play it again is a different matter altogether.

MEGA says: The best game in a very limited genre. But why are beat-'em-ups always so easy to complete? Who knows?

FOR SALE: *Golden Axe*
£15/Swap – 0297 60232
TO SWAP: *Golden Axe*
021 454 9160
FOR SALE: *Golden Axe 2*
£20 – 0993 844434

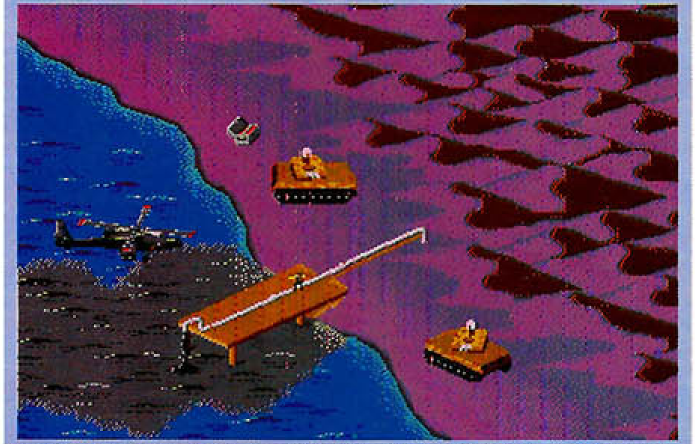
17. DESERT STRIKE

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99

DESERT STRIKE

NUMBER 17

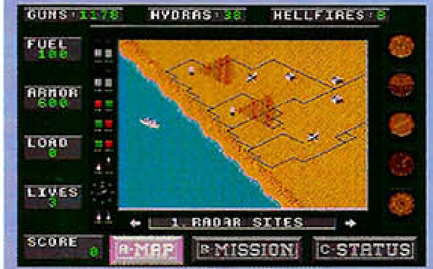
You have to save an invaded Arabic country from a mad dictator. Does it sound familiar? Well, the game's not subtitled *Return to the Gulf* for nothing



The last level, and things are getting tough. Take out the two ZSUs and then the guy on the platform Then blow up the pipe to stop the oil spill

When this game first appeared, in February of 1992, it caused a lot of fuss with its blatant Gulf War tie-in. Once the fuss had died down, however, you could get into the game and find out what a brilliant strategy shoot-'em-up it really was.

The game set up is very simple. You have four campaigns, each of which is split up into several missions, ranging from five to seven depending on the campaign. You need to follow the objectives and complete each mission is turn. It's important that you do each one in turn otherwise you could run into some serious trouble. Rescue the MIAs, destroy all the enemies, and generally make a bit of a mess of the countryside. Then return to your frigate and receive instructions for your next campaign. Sounds easy, doesn't it? Well, when it's only you and your fully-armed Apache A-64 helicopter against an entire entourage of army things, it can get a little bit hectic. You view the game from an above 3D perspective, which allows you a view of a lot of ground and all of your helicopter. You can check out the whole map (and give yourself a breather from the action) by pressing Start. This brings up your status screen, where all manner of things can be seen. You can check out your weaponry, your fuel level, find out where more fuel and ammunition are hidden, look more closely at your mission, check out where the MIAs are, and find the landing zone.



Pause the game to take a breather and check out where you are on the map

The control of the helicopter is very instinctive (in fact there are three types of control, which you can choose from the opening screen) and the whole game is so well presented that nobody should have any trouble getting to grips with it. The graphics are very plain (this is the desert), but the fast eight-way directional scrolling is very smooth and fast.

The variety of artillery you'll come up against is vast and so you'll need to change your tactics for each one. With 27 missions to complete, you might think this game would take a long time to complete. However, with a password for each campaign, each level set over the same scenery and the gameplay very similar from start to finish, this game is over very quickly. Hopefully *Desert Strike 2*, due out in the summer of '93, will give you some more campaigns as well as change the play area, because that's really the only thing wrong with the original.

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £34.99

RELEASE: February '92

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA 0753 549442

MEGA SAYS: It's fast, fun to play, and you get to blow things up. What more do you want from a game? The only fault is that the game remains the same from level to level. 84%

Turn over

TOP 100

Yes, OK, so it's in extremely poor taste, but you can't deny that *Desert Strike* is one of the most excellent pieces of blasting fun that the Mega Drive's ever played host to. Sometimes it can feel like you're fighting the entire war yourself, what with missions to complete, hundreds of enemies to blast and all manner of stuff to rescue with your helicopter's all-purpose winch. But even if you're not the xenophobic type, you'll be hard pushed not to have a great time with this atmospheric and action-packed shoot-'em-up.

MEGA says: Never mind the plotline, go out and get yourself enlisted today. *Desert Strike* is a great game, and that's the only thing that really matters.

TO SWAP: *Desert Strike*
0924 258026
081 578 2671
0463 221173
Swap plus £5 – 0204 592758
Swap plus money – 0302 739655
Swap/Sell £14 – 061 330 1862
Swap plus £3 – 0522 510967

18. THUNDERFORCE 4

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

The sequel to the sequel of the conversion of the coin-op looks prettier than ever before, but gameplay wise it offers nothing more than *Thunderforce 3*. If anything, the groovy graphics (and they really are rather groovy, er, "dadio") get in the way of the action – there's too much going on on-screen at any one time.

MEGA says: Looks great, lots to blast through, looks great, solid shoot-'em-up action, looks great and er, nothing *really* that could be described as special. It really does look great though.

19. WORLD OF ILLUSION

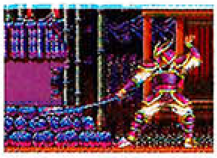
Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

This game is way too easy in one-player mode, but for its brilliant two-player game it earns the number 19 position. It's hard, interactive fun. Gorgeous graphics and amazing animation add to the game, and it make *Castle of Illusion* look old hat.

MEGA says: Don't think about buying this unless you've got a mate to play it with.

20. REVENGE OF SHINOBI

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Revenge Of Shinobi, the excellent follow-up to the popular arcade beat-'em-up, looks great and sounds excellent, and although you've seen the format a hundred times before, this one's so well done that you can forgive it any lack of originality.

MEGA says: Super stuff, with top special effects and just plain special gameplay (if you can be "plain special", that is).

FOR SALE: *Revenge Of Shinobi*
£20/Swap – 0297 60232

21. TAZ-MANIA

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

The most cartoon-like Sega game so far, *Taz-Mania* stars that lovable psychopath, the Tazmanian Devil, in a Sonic-like game of epic (in everything but game size) proportions. It's beautiful, it's hilarious, but it's also a bit repetitive and none too tough to get to the end of. If you've got a Looney Tunes-loving younger brother or sister, though (or if you *are* a Looney Tunes-loving younger brother or sister), this is absolutely ideal.

MEGA says: Brilliantly entertaining, but not all that demanding. *Taz-Mania* is perfect for the kids, and for those of you who can afford to spend lots of dosh on games which you'll finish in three days.

TO SWAP: *Taz-Mania*
0924 258026

22. JAMES POND 2 – ROBOCOD

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

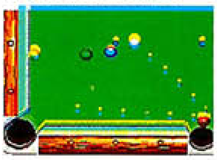
Converted from, but significantly improved upon, the 16-bit computer classic, *Robocod* was the game that took on Sonic at his own game and didn't make a half-bad stab at it. It's a little, er, spacey in parts, but for the most part this gigantic platformer is busy and impressive. Exceptionally pretty, this is one of the best hedgehog clones you can buy.

MEGA says: Great little game, with a different feel to most platformers (largely thanks to your extendible character...). A good laugh.

TO SWAP: *James Pond 2*
Swap – 0924 258026
Swap plus £5 – 0204 592758
FOR SALE: *James Pond 2*
£20/Swap – 0297 60232

23. SIDE POCKET

Publisher: Data East (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

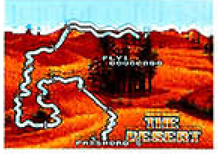


A novel coin-op conversion with bells on. You can try to beat the one-player game, play a mate, or show off your skills in the trick game. Smart graphics, great sound and fun gameplay go to make a strange, but welcome breath of fresh air.

MEGA says: We all luv a game of pool, and this beats paying 30p a go down the pub, every time. (Well, not quite – Neil)

24. LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

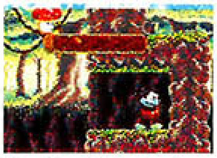


Driving Lotus Elan's or Esprit's across various terrains might not sound like fun, but with great graphics, fab sound and a two player head-to-head game, this one is definitely worth buying.

MEGA says: It beats games like *Out Run* and *Turbo Out Run* hands down. If racing is your thing, buy this now.

25. CASTLE OF ILLUSION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



Mickey Mouse, eh? Don't you just love him? No matter what he does, no matter where he goes, his little mousey ears always stay perfectly round. Yep, even when he appears in really lovely platform adventures like this one, with all manner of strange and beautiful Disney-style fantasy creatures trying to off him in a deeply unfriendly manner as he tries to rescue his sweet mouse babe from the excellently-named witch Mizrabel. What a trouper he is.

MEGA says: A lovely platform epic very much in the style of (whisper it) *Mario*, except without all that tedious head-butting palaver. Gorgeous to look at and gorgeous to play. The whole family will love this one.

TO SWAP: *Castle Of Illusion*
081 578 2671
(Jap) Swap plus £4 – 0204 592758

26. LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

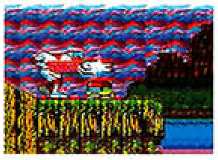
Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

The Mega Drive's first chopper-'em-up and only the second genuine flight sim (albeit in an action-orientated way). The graphics are supremely detailed and suffer from only a slight jerkiness while the action remains fast and, indeed, furious.

MEGA says: Anyone who's ever seen *Apocalypse Now* or *Wings Of The Apache* will relish this chance to spray heat-seeking death at anything that moves. And anyone who fancies "having a go" at developing their own military tactics and completing a whole Eastenders (long drawn-out series) of missions will find plenty to get their teeth stuck in to.

27. DECAP ATTACK

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

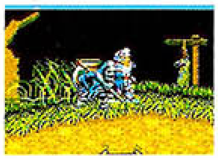


Decap Attack (originally released as *Magical Hat Turbo Adventure*) may at first glance make you go "yuck". But if you persist past the first 20 seconds, you'll suddenly discover that you're having a brilliant time, thanks to the rollicking platform escapades that make up this wonderfully tasteless game. Controlling a character who can chuck his proper head (his name's Chuck D Head, good eh?) and who has an extra, telescopic, head in his ribcage is simply great fun, and the cheesy music complements the gameplay perfectly.

MEGA says: Ropeyish graphics, but don't let that put you off this gorgeous and funny platformer.

28. GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



A frighteningly tough coin-op conversion, but hey, it's not as if you have to shovel money into the thing, so who cares? You certainly won't be seeing the end of this one during the same day you buy it, and that's even with infinite continues. The graphics and sound are practically flawless, as brave Sir Arthur scuttles his swathe through legions of platform-placed zombies, monsters and vultures. *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is simply one of the best arcade games around.

MEGA says: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is the business – and, for once, the tough difficulty tuning guarantees decent value for money as well as being great short-term arcade fun. Go for it!

29. POPULOUS

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

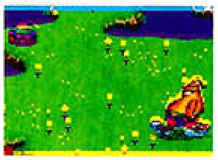
Immensely strange and original God-simulator game in which you hold sway over the very shape of the land itself, as you try to create an army of followers to defeat an opposing deity. Slightly forbidding at first with a mass of controls to get the hang of, but once you're in, you'll probably never want to come back out.

MEGA says: One of the most compulsive games ever invented. There's nothing else like it on the MD so, egomaniacs everywhere, don't miss it.

FOR SALE: *Populous*
£20 – 0993 844434

30. TOE JAM AND EARL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



Speaking of multi-player action, though, it doesn't get a lot more entertaining than this. Toe jam (urgh) and Earl are two of the grooviest aliens you could ask to have a close encounter with, which is part of the reason why it's such a pleasure to help them out on their quest to rebuild their crashed spaceship. The rest of the reason, though, is the superbly manic and zany action which takes place as our two heroes career around the screen, causing havoc wherever they go. After a few plays, the lower levels tend to drag a bit (there's no password option), but this game is both original and insane. You'll love it.

MEGA says: Another OK game which becomes completely essential when played with someone else. Got any friends? Buy this. Haven't got any friends? Buy this and make some.

31. SPEEDBALL 2

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £34.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

This game is Mega Drive violence at its most extreme. Nominally a future sports sim, *Speedball 2* is actually football meets rollerball meets bare-knuckle boxing in a frantic and immensely brutal festival of blood and guts. There's also plenty of room for skill and strategy, which means that for an all-round sporting experience *Speedball 2* is hard to beat – especially in two-player mode.

MEGA says: Very much an arcade sports game (rather than the more tactical approach favoured by, say, *John Madden Football*), this is about as good as arcade sports games get. *Speedball 2* is totally vicious and totally excellent.

32. PIT FIGHTER

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £37.99

Ooh look, it's another beat-'em-up. Ah yes, but wait... this one's different. How come? Well, it's got digitised graphics, guv. That means the fighters you take on in this simulation of that ugliest of "sports" (pit fighting, that is) look incredibly realistic, which means you can imagine that it's a real human being you're knocking the living daylights out of. You sad person.

MEGA says: Pretty dull and morally dubious beat-'em-up fare. You won't find much prettier BEUs, but gameplay-wise you could do a lot better than this.

33. SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

A mammoth, gorgeous RPG (as opposed to a gorgeous mammoth RPG, which would be a completely different proposition involving attractive elephants, wouldn't it?) with lovely aesthetics and gameplay which will keep you entranced for months. *Shining In The Darkness* is probably the Mega Drive's most accessible RPG, so comes highly recommended to anyone who fancies giving the genre a try.

MEGA says: A bit of a must for RPG fans, but even if you're not into the genre, give this a try. You might find that you're pleasantly surprised.

FOR SALE: *Shining In Darkness*
£25 – 071 834 4644

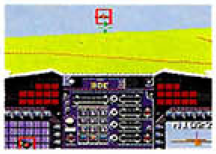
34. PHANTASY STAR 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £59.99

Not quite as big and sexy as *Phantasy Star 3*, obviously, but pretty impressive all the same.
MEGA says: Great stuff, but at this price it's strictly for the absolute fanatics.

35. F-22 INTERCEPTOR

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99



There aren't many flight simulators around on the Mega Drive, which, to be honest, is most of the reason why this is the best one. The graphics are fab, but the gameplay gets repetitive a bit too quickly for our liking.
MEGA says: If you want a flight sim, this is about as good as they currently get. Luckily Microprose has some fantastic up, down, flying around, looping-the-loop-type stuff in the pipeline.
FOR SALE: *F-22 Interceptor*
£20 – 0635 45736

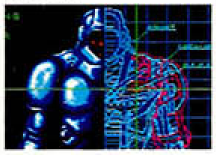
36. STRIDER

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99

Amazing graphics, superb sound, lovely animation and some of the biggest and baddest enemies you'll ever meet, are the ingredients of *Strider*. Pretty simplistic platform-leaping beat-'em-up is the order of the day here, but *Strider* does it better than most, and it does it looking better than almost anything. Oh yeah, and the "running down the side of a mountain" sequence is just about worth the money by itself.
MEGA says: You'll finish it in two days, but if you want something which will show your friends the power of the Mega Drive, this is the game (second to only *Sonic*) that'll make them go "gosh, wow" the most.
FOR SALE: *Strider*
£20 – 071 834 4644

37. ESWAT

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Bearing only the slightest resemblance to the coin-op of the same name, *ESWAT* luckily manages to be an even better game than its arcade counterpart. It's got a bit more to it than the coin-op's limited beat-'em-up formula, and although it's still no *Sword Of Vermillion*, there's just about enough thinking to keep you interested to the end.
MEGA says: There are literally dozens of this type of game around, but this is one of the relatively few which are actually worth having. Pretty simplistic, but still involving and addictive.

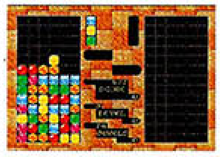
38. SHADOW DANCER

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

ESWAT with a dog, basically.
MEGA says: More fab scrolling beat-'em-up action, and you'll find yourself getting really attached to your little ninja pooch, too. The baddies are truly bad and the ninja scum that Joe's fighting against put up a decent enough fight. There are plenty of secret bonuses and hidden goodies to keep the interest factor up. Well worth a bang – check it out.

39. COLUMNS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



The game they give away with the Game Gear, and it's easy to see why – it's worth buying one of the fabby little machines just to play this, except, of course, you don't have to. This brilliant cross between *Tetris* and *Klax* is better on the Mega Drive than anywhere else, thanks mainly to the fact that the graphics are big enough to let you actually see what's going on. great stuff solo, but the two-player head-to-head "flash" game is totally wonderful. The best Mega Drive puzzle game going.
MEGA says: Buy another joypad, buy *Columns*, and then invite some of your friends round. Then see if you can get them to leave...

40. KID CHAMELEON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Ultra-cute platform thang with lots of really neat touches, but it's too easy and not all that exciting. Sega hyped this game almost as much as *Sonic*, so they must have been a bit disappointed with its lack-lustre performance sales-wise. The game isn't at all bad, and remember – you don't have to be great to be good.
MEGA says: Not too bad, just don't listen to Sega.
TO SWAP: *Kid Chameleon*
Swap plus £5 – 0204 592758

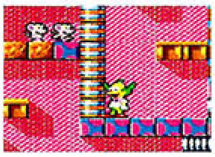
41. JOE MONTANA 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

The only serious (ha) threat to the *John Madden* crown comes back for a third time. It's got several things *John Madden '93* hasn't, notably a league, three different viewpoints and a zoom in mode. However, it's not as playable or friendly to use. This is one for the serious American Football fan.
MEGA says: Sega try again, but they fall just short. It's worth checking out if American Football is your thang.

42. KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE

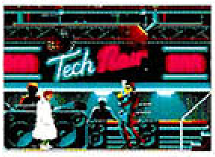
Publisher: Flying Edge
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



The Simpsons always threatened to invade the world of Mega Drive games, but they arrived about six months too late to cash in on the height of the hype. Luckily for Krusty, his game is good enough to make a good impression in its own right. There's lots of puzzles, lots of cartoony graphics and lots of fun to be had by all.
MEGA says: *Krusty's Super Fun House* is one of a rare breed of game: a licensed title that manages to combine a big name with a decent game. Good rat-splatting stuff.

43. TERMINATOR

Publisher: Virgin
Price: £39.99



You're really enjoying yourself, you're marvelling at the lush graphics, you're being blown away by the non-stop all-action platform shoot-'em-up gameplay, you're blasting through the fourth level and... er, then you finish it. That's it then, eh?
MEGA says: Lovely game, but there's not nearly enough of it.

44. TWO CRUDE DUDES

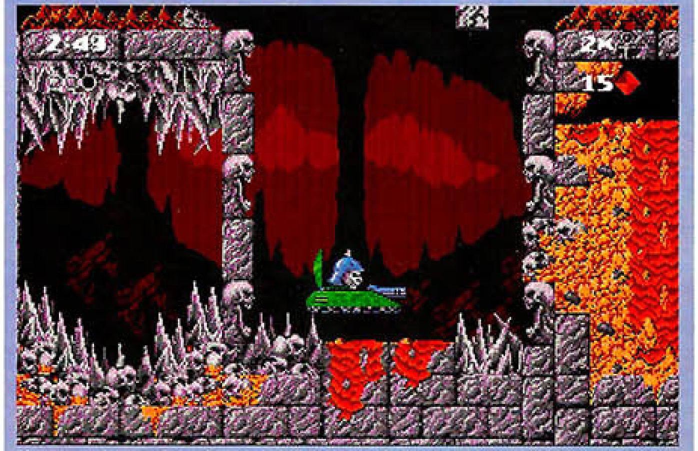
Publisher: Data East (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Well, it's a beat-'em-up and it's got some crude dudes in it. Er...
MEGA says: A fairly accurate version of the coin-op *Crude Busters* and it's OK. The whole game looks good and plays OK but it's just too easy to finish. Same old story...
TO SWAP: *Two Crude Dudes*
Swap – 0535 601065

KID CHAMELEON

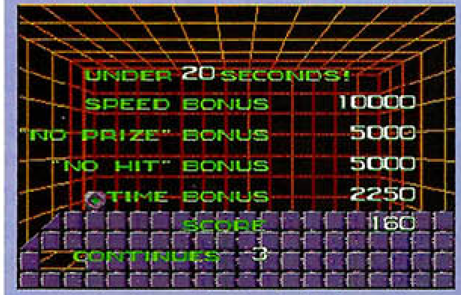
NUMBER 40

This guy was billed as the next *Sonic*, and while the game may not be as good as one starring a certain little blue hedgehog, you can't ignore this cool dude



You may have picked up the tank helmet and turned our Kid into a tank, but you've fallen into a gap and I don't think there's a way out of here

Kid Chameleon is his name, and he's good at games. Every game he's ever played he has cracked, and nothing held any challenge for him anymore. Then an amazing holographic machine appeared in his local arcade. Everybody wanted to have a go, but once they got inside they never come back out (sounds like a plot from a bad sci-fi movie, doesn't it?). People began to get a bit worried (wouldn't you?) by the fact that close relations and friends were being eaten by this machine, so they called on the only guy who could defeat this machine. Yes you've guessed it – Kid Chameleon is the man for the job.



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UNDER 20 SECONDS!
SPEED BONUS           10000
"NO PRIZE" BONUS       5000
"NO HIT" BONUS         5000
TIME BONUS             2250
SCORE                   160
CONTINUES    3
```

You totally stormed that level, didn't you? Look at all those points. Well done

You are the Kid, but before you get your hopes up, there's one thing you'd better know about this machine. It's big. There are over 100 levels and some of these are massive as well. Kid, however, is not exactly a wimp, and he has the ability to collect helmets hidden in special blocks somewhere in the game. These helmets give him a different persona and turn him into a deadly fighting machine. Sometimes there are dud ones hidden around, which are useless, but most of the time you'll need a certain helmet to complete a level. Find the appropriate helmet and then get out.

The gameplay is very *Mario/Sonic*-esque in its approach, and it is very playable. The sheer size of the game, however, will put most people off, and the pace of the game, due to the fact that it is such a large game, could definitely do with being turned up a few notches.

The graphics and sound are both very good, and each sprite per helmet is very ingenious and comical. Some of the levels take a lot of working out and you'll need to practice them a fair few times before you figure out exactly how to get through them.

It's an incredibly well presented affair, and if you're after a game that's going to last you a long time, and you can cope with the (sometimes) very slow pace of the game, then *Kid Chameleon* might very well be the game for you. It's a real shame that they didn't add some sort of password system to make your progress through the game a bit simpler. But hey, we're always crying out for game that take longer to finish than two hours, and here it is. Well done Sega.

PUBLISHER: Sega
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE: August '92
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: Sega 071 727 8070
MEGA SAYS: A very large platform game but it's no *Sonic*. If large platform games are your thing, then *Kid Chameleon* might well be the best game that you ever buy.
81%

Turn over

TOP 100

45. AFTERBURNER 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

The arcade version of *Afterburner* (all style and no content) threw the player and his lunch all around a hydraulic cockpit while simultaneously flinging huge graphics at the screen so fast that all you could do was wrench the joystick around wildly, keep your finger locked on the trigger and hope desperately for the best.

Mega Drive *Afterburner* recreates the feel of the coin-op perfectly, except that you'll have to get someone to come round and jiggle your chair for you while you play. What else is there to say?
MEGA says: Er, this, I suppose. *Afterburner 2* (ie *Afterburner*) is excellent short-term blasting, but it's thinner than gold plating on a window, and there are plenty of other shoot-'em-ups that'll give you bigger thrills. Try *Hellfire* or *Aero Blasters* for starters.

46. THUNDERFORCE 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £35.99

Of course, with the arrival of *Thunderforce 4*, it might seem a bit ludicrous to rush out and buy this now. But if you don't, you'll be missing out on some of the best blasting mayhem this side of, er, anywhere. But not only that. You'll also be missing out on the chance to make your mates go "Woo!" at some of the best visual effects yet seen on the Mega Drive. It's not all cosmetics though – *Thunderforce 3* is also a damn fine shoot-'em-up in its own right. If you're a zapping fan, this is another one of those "must-haves", basically.
MEGA says: Gorgeous blaster which is perhaps slightly better to look at than play, but that's probably because it's so bloody wonderful to look at.

47. BUCK ROGERS "COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY"

Publisher: EA
Price: £49.99

Not one of the most spectacular games you'll ever see, but the game's got tons of depth. Searching around this futuristic strategic RPG thing will keep you interested, but MEGA wants to know why they left out the old Twiki robot?
MEGA says: Very nice, but wouldn't it have been better to use the licence for a good old-fashioned shoot-'em-up? MEGA thinks so.
FOR SALE: *Buck Rogers*
£25 – 071 834 4644
£20 – 0993 844434

48. NEW ZEALAND STORY

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Another classic coin-op that's seen incarnations on just about every format imaginable, but the Mega Drive version takes an unexpected twist by being less of a conversion than a rearrangement of the original. All the same features found in the arcade game are present and correct, but the level layouts and structures are almost completely different. While this is a bit of a bummer for arcade perfectionists, it means that *New Zealand Story* fans now have a whole new game to play, and that can't be a bad thing.
MEGA says: *New Zealand Story* on the Mega Drive is as cute, clever and addictive as it ever was, so who cares if all the bits are in different places? Not us, that's for sure.

49. TEAM USA BASKETBALL

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

This is the best Mega Drive basketball game so far. Excellent two-player action and wacky signature moves make this the essential purchase for all basketball fans.
MEGA says: Shame its: a) just a tad too easy; and b) not quite up to the usual EASN standard. But apart from these two quibbles, it's lovely.
TO SWAP: *Team USA Basketball*
Swap plus money – 0302 739655

50. TRUXTON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99
Shoot-'em-up, huh? Vertical scrolling, huh? Bit easy to beat, isn't it?
MEGA says: Well yes, but on the whole, *Truxton* is a decent enough effort. It's good fun to pick up and play every now and again, but it'll never change your life, or even give you one especially wonderful evening. Mmm, sorry.

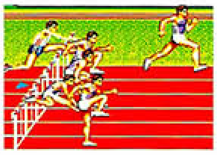
51. DRAGON'S FURY

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

It's a pinball game.
MEGA says: And it's lovely.

52. OLYMPIC GOLD

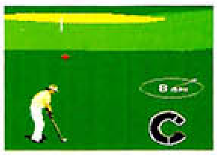
Publisher: US Gold
Price: £39.99



The graphics may be lush, but at the root of it all, it's just a creative way to pummel the living daylights out of your joypad.
MEGA says: Pretty dull by yourself, but excellent fun when you've got a few mates round.
FOR SALE: *Olympic Gold*
£19 – 0603 812892

53. WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £37.99



Well, it's pretty good, but it's not really *PGA Tour*, now is it?
MEGA says: No it isn't. Unless you're absolutely golf loopy nuts and just *have* to have every available sim, get *PGA* and settle for that.

54. BATTLE SQUADRON

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Amiga conversion time again, but this vertically-scrolling blaster looked pretty dated even when it originally appeared about two years ago, and it hasn't really improved with age. Good solid zapping action, but nothing to really hold your attention.
MEGA says: Bog-standard vertical zaperama with little or nothing to make it stand out from the crowd.

55. AQUATIC GAMES

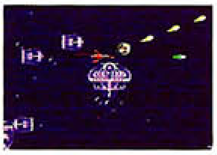
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

THE AQUATIC GAMES

James Pond is back. This time, however, he's taking part (with his friends) in the Aquatic Games. Work out the best tactic for each event and get those gold medals. Lovely graphics and some taxing events make this a fun game, especially for those younger Mega Drive owners.
MEGA says: It's button bashing alright, but not as we know it.
TO SWAP: *Aquatic Games*
Swap plus money – 0302 7439655

56. BIO-HAZARD BATTLE

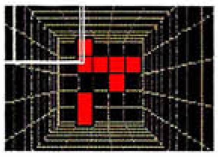
Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA



Sexy graphics and spooky sound don't make a game, but they do go a long way. Thankfully *Bio-Hazard Battle* has some exciting shooting action to go with it. It's not the most original idea going, but it has a two-player option. We like it.
MEGA says: There's nothing new in here, but it's very playable.

57. BLOCKOUT

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99



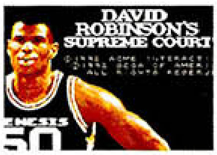
Your brain will never forgive you. Imagine *Tetris*, played looking down a well, with three-dimensional vector-graphic wire-frame blocks which can be moved, turned and rotated in each of the three axes. Having problems imagining it? Just you try playing it, mate.
MEGA says: Complete mind torture, but if you're a professional mathematician or more laid back than a particularly relaxed sloth, you'll get some serious puzzling fun out of this one.

58. F1 CIRCUS

Publisher: Nichibutsu (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
This game is second only to the *Super Monaco GP* twins, *F1 Circus* looks ropey but plays well. The Formula One tie-in is well implemented and playing the game makes a fairly realistic representation of putting you in the cockpit of the real thing. In other words, you'll crash a lot.
MEGA says: If realism gets your motor running (even if it's at the expense of lush graphics), then check this out.
TO SWAP: *F1 Circus*
Swap plus money – 0302 739655

59. DAVID ROBINSON BASKETBALL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



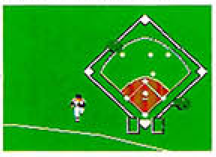
The best of a whole clutch of basketball games recently released by various people. Though still not up to *Team USA Basketball* this one boasts by far the smoothest, fastest action, and some of the nicest effects too. If basketball's your bag (ahem), this is your kind of shopping trolley. (What? – Ed.)
MEGA says: Bouncy bouncy, bouncy bouncy, fun, fun, fun, fun, fun. (What? – Ed.) Tiggers. And basketballs. (Ah – Ed.)

60. SUPER HANG-ON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £19.99
Road Rash, without all the violence. Yes, we know it sounds like a bit of a bad idea, but if what you're after is pure high-speed racing thrills, then this is still your best bet. A near-perfect rendition of the coin-op, too – just try to stop yourself from leaning into those bends...
MEGA says: It looks lovely, it plays beautifully, it'll last for ever. Along with *Super Monaco* and *Road Rash*, the only genuinely essential racing game for your Mega Drive.
FOR SALE: *Super Hang On*
£20/Swap – 0297 60232

61. SPORTS TALK BASEBALL

Publisher: Sega USA (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



A decent baseball game, that tells you just what's going on as it actually happens.
MEGA says: As with *Joe Montana Football 2*, great for people with no friends.

62. DODGEBALL

Publisher: Sega Japan (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

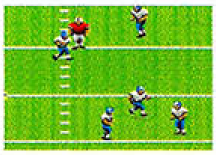
Volleyball meets *Speedball* in this strange, but entertaining Japanese game. The idea is to knock your opponent's team members out of the court with a high-speed chuck of (what can only be) either a cannon or medicine ball. Decidedly strange, inevitably violent and great fun – almost like sellotaping a vulture to your friend's anorak.
MEGA says: Not sure about this vulture/anorak business, but *Dodgeball* remains a good two (or more) player game.

63. ARCUS ODYSSEY

Publisher: Renovation (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
A lovely looking 3D game, which scores points for offering some of the best simultaneous two-player action that's going.
MEGA says: *Arcus Odyssey* is OK by us.

64. JOE MONTANA 2 - SPORTS TALK FOOTBALL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Nope, sorry, even this sequel to the original "not too bad but let's face it, it's not as good as *John Madden*" American football game fails to lace the boots or plump the padding of the boy from Electronic Arts. Nice try but no cigar.
MEGA says: It's not as good as *John Madden Football* but it talks to you. Perfect for gridiron fanatics with no friends.

65. FIGHTING MASTERS

Publisher: Treco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Solid two-player beat-'em-up action is the name of this lovely looking game. If only the beast was a bit more substantial in one-player mode.
MEGA says: Two-player pommelling can be a great laugh (especially with 12 intergalactic hard cases to play with), but don't bother with *Fighting Masters* if you're a solo scrapper.

66. CHUCK ROCK

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99
This is an old Amiga game which has been brushed up a bit for the Mega Drive and, as you might expect, it's a bit of a lush looker. What you might not expect is a fabby prehistoric platform game which plays like an episode of The Flintstones (except it's funnier) and in which you dispose of your enemies by bouncing them off your gigantic beer belly. Nope, you might not expect that, but it's what you'll get anyway. Ha.
MEGA says: A really enjoyable platformer, packed to the brim with variation, lovely little touches and more imagination than a dozen lesser efforts in this overloaded genre.
TO SWAP: *Chuck Rock*
0633 850885

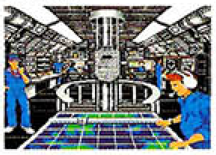
67. TETRIS

Publisher: (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Okay, hands up everyone who doesn't know about *Tetris*. Three of you, eh? Well, pay attention this time. Tsch.
MEGA says: The biggest and sexiest puzzle game of all eternity

comes to the Mega Drive. If, by some incredibly unlikely fluke, you don't already have a *Tetris* game, then get this one now. Either that or you'll have to buy a Game Boy.

68. 688 ATTACK SUB

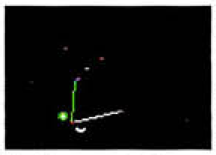
Publisher: SEGA
Price: £34.99



Nice, atmospheric submarine simulator with a bit of zapping and some pleasant aesthetics.
MEGA says: PING!... Not the kind of thing you ever PING!... imagine anybody buying a Mega PING!... Drive for, but good at what it does.

69. STAR CONTROL

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99



Massive but not actually all that complicated space strategy trading thing with zappy and tactical bits thrown in as a life-preserver.
MEGA says: A bit of a lark with a chum if you're after something different, but kinda dull if you're on your own.
TO SWAP: *Star Control*
Swap plus money – 0302 739655

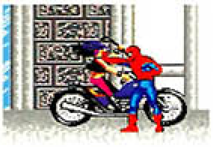
70. HERZOG ZWEI

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Eight-way scrolling, view-from-above, simultaneous two-player, head-to-head, split-screen shoot-and think-'em-up with bags of strategy. It could have been a classic, but didn't quite manage to hang together.
MEGA says: Almost excellent for two-player head-to-head. If you can pick it up cheap, you may love it.

71. SPIDERMAN

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



"Spiderman, Spiderman, does whatever a spider can." So how come you never see him getting trapped in a bath then, eh?
MEGA says: Pretty run-of-the-mill platform game, lifted out of the ordinary by some pretty spiffy graphics and a nice line in enemies. This is, however, still really only for web-slinging fanatics and the Manic Street Preachers (evidently they're big fans).

72. CORPORATION

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99
Gigantic and tough 3D, RPG-ish Amiga conversion with some top 3D blasting bits in it. The idea is that you're a secret agent briefed with the unenviable job of trying to establish whether rumours of a company creating killer genetic mutants is true or not. It's involving and absorbing although it can get a bit repetitive if constantly creeping around mutant-infested buildings inches from death, isn't your idea of a good night out.
MEGA says: For RPG fun with a bit more blasting *and* a bit more brain-stretching than usual, this is a pretty damn good buy.
FOR SALE: *Corporation*
£20 – 0993 844434

73. TEST DRIVE 2

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £34.99
A two-player, head-to-head driving game that sounds as if it should be great, but somehow never lives up to expectations.
MEGA says: Enjoyable serious-ish, two-player driving/crashing game, which you may never be able to buy. Life's a bitch, eh?

74. TROUBLE SHOOTER

Publisher: Vic Tokai (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Madison and Crystal take to the skies to kick some alien butt in an entertaining shoot-'em-up with a choice of five special weapons, some seriously whacked-out bosses and five levels of constant action.
MEGA says: A tad too small and a tad too easy, but while it lasts, *Trouble Shooter* is right good stuff.

75. ARNOLD PALMER TOURNAMENT GOLF

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

More golf? Haven't we covered that one already? Of "course" we have! (Another joke like that and you're fired. I'm not joking – Ed.)
MEGA says: *PGA Tour's* the game you want.

76. GLEY LANCER

Publisher: NCS (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 2 in MEGA

Another shoot-'em-up to add to the collection, but at least this one has got something different. The different firing patterns of your sister pods (that follow you around) add a good deal of difficulty to the proceedings
MEGA says: The weapon systems are fun and they make this shoot-'em-up stand out from the rest.

77. GAMES – THE WINTER CHALLENGE

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99
Pretty run-of-the-mill snowbound sports sim with eight ice-tastic events. As ever, lots of laughs with your buddies, but a real snoozeathon if you try it solo.
MEGA says: This one's been kind of overtaken by *Olympic Gold* as the Mega Drive's première multi-event sports game, but it's still a good example of the genre. It's just not a particularly outstanding genre, is all.

One claim to fame that *Games* can cling to as its own, however, is that it is Ballistic's best ever game. Hooray!

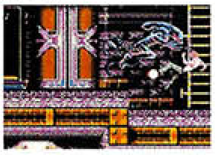
78. KLAX

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £34.99

A massive coin-op cult (ie hardly anyone played it but everyone who did, loved it to bits), *Klax* is one of the best puzzle games ever. Unlike *Tetris* et al, you get a bit of scope for your own strategies instead of just needing lightning reactions, although you'll have to have those too. Very original and excellently designed, with a groovy two-player head-to-head game to boot, *Klax* will test your speed, sight, and spatial perception, all at the same time. Can you handle it?
MEGA says: *Columns, Tetris, Blockout* and *Klax* – the only puzzle games you'll ever need. Geniuses shouldn't be without any of them.

79. ALIEN 3

Publisher: Flying Edge
Price: £34.99

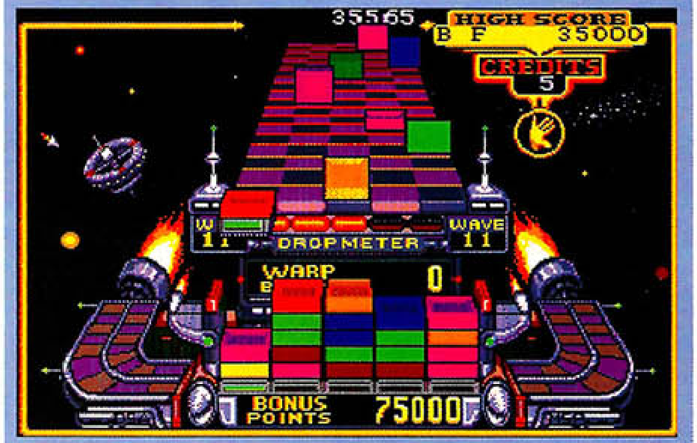


Strangely reminiscent of *Terminator*, but then when you realise that both games come from the programmers at Probe, maybe it's not such a big surprise after all. This time you're Ripley and you're faced with the

KLAX

NUMBER 78

Coin-op conversions are usually very dull. But when you move into the world of puzzle games, they can actually be quite interesting

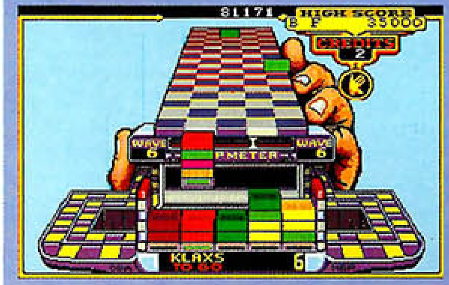


You've finished this level, but you've still got another 89 left to go. Still, your score is looking impressive

After giving *Columns* the past master treatment in the last issue, we thought we'd show you the other side of the puzzle coin in *Klax*. In the arcades, *Klax* (by Atari) is a classic. Great sound, great playability and always that extra urge to put in that last 20 pence that you had put aside to buy a Mars bar.

The Mega Drive version doesn't eat up your last 20 pence of course (unless you've done some very strange customising), and that makes the game lose its addictive edge. Don't get me wrong, the game is fine enough, but it just doesn't appeal as much as the arcade version does.

The game idea is simple. You've got a five by five grid and a runway. Tiles flip and fall down the runway and you've got to catch them by placing your flipper under them. Once you've caught a tile, you can then decide where in the bin you want to flip it. If you don't want to use it at that particular moment, you can hold onto it. Your flipper can hold five tiles, so there's no need for immediate panic.



The graphics change from level to level, so you won't get bored of staring at the same screen for 100 levels

If, when you flip the tiles into the bin, you get three or more of the same colour, horizontally, vertically or diagonally, they'll disappear and you'll be credited with having got a Klax. Well done.

Each level sets you a different task: sometimes you'll have to get a certain number of a certain type of Klax in order to reach the next level, ten diagonal for example. At other times you'll have to survive a number of tiles or score a set amount of points.

As you carry on through the levels (of which there are 100), they'll get harder, because the tiles travel faster. This means you'll have to think faster and the whole business can get very messy. The graphics are used well and it's nice to see the background change. There are some nice sampled effects, such as clapping if you complete a level and a nice Ooooh! if you get a large Klax (sounds painful – Neil). It all plays very well, but the game just doesn't have that addictive edge to make you want to come back for more.

If puzzle action is your thing, then make sure you play *Columns* to death before you even think about crossing the road to look in the window of a shop which sells *Klax*. Oh and by the way, don't buy the Jap version, because it's a different game and very badly programmed.

PUBLISHER: Tengen

PRICE: £34.99

RELEASE: August '91

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Domark 081 780 2222

MEGA SAYS: A classy puzzle game, but when you compare it to the likes of *Columns* it really isn't all that good. If you're a puzzle addict, this should fill that gaping hole on your shelf. 72%

Turn over

task of machine-gunning, grenade-chucking and alien-blasting your way through platform after platform of action.
MEGA says: Nothing special, and certainly nothing to get excited about. Without the atmospheric effects and intro of *Terminator* the game falls into the ranks of all the other seen-it-all-before platformers.
FOR SALE: *Alien 3*
£20 – 0993 844434
£20 – 061 330 1862
WANTED: *Alien 3*
0935 75578

80. JAMES POND

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99

The prequel to *Robocod*, but a more inferior game. Some cute platform/swimming around fun, but nothing that'll really set your head on fire. Er, not that you'd especially want it to.
MEGA says: The 12 levels won't last you too long, and you'll probably get a bit bored before the end, anyway. This is, however, still good fun for a few days.

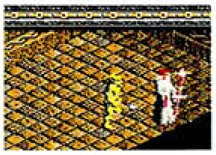
81. TWINKLE TALE

Publisher: WAS (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)

Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA
A fun, original and addictive shoot-'em-up, that suffers from begin too easy. The seven levels are varied and the end-of-level bosses look great, but you'll finish it within two days.
MEGA says: It's great fun, and it's a cute shoot-'em-up. It's just a damn shame the thing is so easy to complete.

82. THE IMMORTAL

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99



A massive but ropey-looking RPG and with loads of blood 'n' guts definitely one for the gore-thirsty gameplayer. It's very slick but very repetitive and it's all over very quickly. Ah well!
MEGA says: It's an OK game, and some will flip over the graphics, but think very carefully before you blow £40 on this game.
FOR SALE: *The Immortal*
£20 – 0993 844434
£25 – 0244 534219
TO SWAP: *The Immortal*
Swap plus £3 – 0522 510967

83. DARIUS 2

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
You wanna see something different? Then how about seeing seven different endings? Now that is a way of extending a game's lifespan. This classy, sideways-scrolling shoot-'em-up offers enough to earn it a place in the Top 100, but it doesn't quite break any new ground to position it higher than this.
MEGA says: Nice graphics, nice sound, nice challenge – but nothing new whatsoever. An above-average sideways-scroller that's worth a look.

84. MIGHT AND MAGIC

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

A drastically over-expensive game with a dated control interface and crap graphics. But this is still a deep and absorbing role playing game. You can, however, do much better for your money.Check out the *Phantasy Star* series to see exactly what I mean.
MEGA says: This one's past its prime, to be honest.

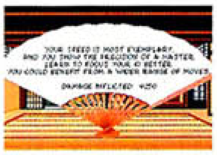
85. CALIFORNIA GAMES

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Half-pipe skateboarding, foot-bag, roller-skating, surfing and BMXing: those Californians sure know how to have a great time, don't they? This multi-event game is a lot of fun to get into, but there's no real long-term appeal.
MEGA says: Put the £40 in a bank account for about fifty years at 12% interest, then go to the USA yourself. Sorted.
TO SWAP: *California Games*
Swap plus £3 – 0522 510967

86. BUDOKAN

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99



Martial arts-type beat-'em-up, which requires a little more thought than most. At the end of the day, it's a lot of wiggling the joypad, hitting the buttons and hoping for the best, though.
MEGA says: If beating computer people up (in four different "sporting" events), is where you get your thrills, this is one of the less brain-rotting ways in which you can go about it.
TO SWAP: *Budokan*
Swap plus £3 – 0522 510967

87. ZERO WING

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

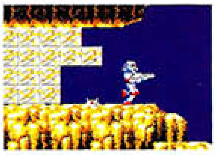
Of all the millions of horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-ups for the Mega Drive, *Zero Wing* is probably, er, the easiest. You'll finish this within three attempts, which is a bit of a shame as it's otherwise about as good as the genre gets. Lots of nice big aliens, smooth and precise control, and decent weaponry make it lots of fun to play, but there's not much point when you've already finished it!
MEGA says: A really lovely, playable shoot-'em-up, but way, way too easy for all but the most unco-ordinated.

88. THUNDERFORCE 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99
Basically, *Thunderforce 3* with some different scrolling bits, but not quite as good.
MEGA says: OK, but why bother with this when there's *Thunderforce 3* (or *Thunderforce 4* for that matter) out there? Or *Aero Blasters* or *Hellfire*, come to that.

89. TURRICAN

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99



A supremely popular home computer game, but maybe that just shows how easy all those Amiga and ST owners are to please. *Turrican* is an absolutely colossal platform-leaping, shoot-'em-upping, landscape-exploring, epic of a game. But after a while you start thinking, "Oh good, another 100 screens to plough through before I get to the next interesting bit. I wouldn't mind, but they're exactly the same as the last 100 screens".
MEGA says: It's decent enough for a while, but if you've got the patience or the high boredom threshold needed to get to the end, you're a better man than any of us.

90. EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99
This football game was previously seen on home computer formats as the extremely popular *Manchester United Europe*. The fact that it is now the best Mega Drive football game around isn't so much down to it being brilliant, but because there are only about two competitors, both of which are rubbish. Still, this is slick, fast and enjoyable, and although it's easy to beat, you'll get months of fun from the two-player mode. Well worth a look for footy fans.
MEGA says: The undisputed Mega Drive soccer king, but that title will probably go out of the window when Mega Drive's *Kick Off* makes an appearance. Wait for that and then make your own judgement.
TO SELL: *Euro Club Soccer*
£15 – 061 330 1862

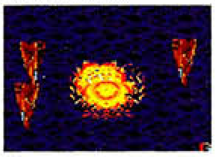
91. FATAL REWIND

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

You may know this re-titled computer-game classic better as *The Killing Game Show*. It's like *Rainbow Islands* in many ways (without the gameplay), but with big butch metallic graphics and a little bit more to think about – like how impressive the interactive action replay feature is. There's no more going back miles when you get killed either – you just watch your last performance, then take over a split second before you made that last silly mistake. Excellently compulsive platforming fun, if you like that sort of thing.
MEGA says: If you fancy something a bit different from the ordinary cutesy-graphics formula stuff that is most Mega Drive platform games (and who doesn't from time to time?), then *Fatal Rewind* could be the game for you.

92. SUPER AIRWOLF

Publisher: Kyugu (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)



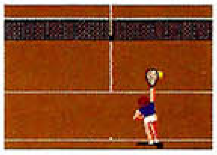
Super Airwolf is known as *Crossfire* in the US and that should be enough to tell you that this game's got absolutely nowt to do with *Airwolf* – it's just an old vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up with a new name stuck on it for a quick licence to cash-in. Fortunately (for us) though, it is quite a good old vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up, but it's still nothing you haven't seen a dozen times before.
MEGA says: One of the best efforts in the vertical-blasting genre, but worthwhile only if you don't already have half-a-dozen of the little blighters. Groovy soundtrack though.

93. EL VIENTO

Publisher: Renovation (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
What do you expect to hear about yet another bog-standard platform beat-'em-up? That the name means "The Double-Decker Bus" in Spanish? That'd be interesting, wouldn't it? If only it were true...
MEGA says: Not true, though. Yet another bog-standard beat-'em-up.

94. GRAND SLAM TENNIS

Publisher: Telenet (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)



Good fun in two-player mode, but severely limited for a solo outing. We could describe this mediocre tennis game as a load of balls, but that would be a tad harsh, so we won't.
MEGA says: Unfortunately, this is the Mega Drive's only tennis game but it really isn't anything special.

95. GADGET TWINS

Publisher: GameTek (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

It's cute and it's playable, but it's not exactly an original idea, is it? Good fun bashing fun in the short-term and the two-player option is a good idea.
MEGA says: It's one of those games you either love or hate.
TO SWAP: *Gadget Twins*
Swap/Sell £10 – 061 330 1862

96. ROLLING THUNDER 2

Publisher: Namco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
The original *Rolling Thunder* was a fantastic coin-op, and *Rolling Thunder 2* on the Mega Drive is a fair copy. But the sprite movement is severely limited, letting down what could have been a great, basic platform-shooting game.
MEGA says: Not bad at all, but not in the same league as *Revenge Of Shinobi* et al.

97. JEWEL MASTER

Publisher: SEGA
Price: £34.99
This is a platformer which has some nice touches of originality (wearing different combinations of rings creates different special weapons), but you don't have to use any of the clever stuff in order to finish it inside two days.
MEGA says: Not really a jewel, more of a decanter set.

98. TALMIT'S ADVENTURE (MARVEL LAND)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

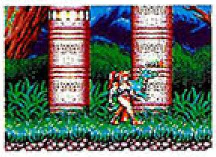
Super-cutesy platforming action, like *Sonic The Hedgehog* with more primary colours. It looks fabulous and plays better than it looks, so why don't you go out and get it?
MEGA says: One of the best platformers around, and one of the few games which can lure girls to your joypad too.

99. BATMAN

Publisher: Sega USA (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Nothing massively (or even tinily) original here, just lots of wandering around Bat-platforms and Bat-mazes beating up Bat-opponents. There's plenty of Bat-action but really not that many thrills.
MEGA says: Not bad, in fact really quite good. *Batman Returns* (reviewed in issue three of MEGA did very little to improve on the original).

100. ALISIA DRAGOON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



Just what the Mega Drive world was crying out for, a female hero in charge of a bunch of over eager dragons.
MEGA says: The best dragon-based platform game around. Probably.
TO SWAP: *Alisia Dragoon*
Swap – 0768 899773
FOR SALE: *Alisia Dragoon*
£23 – 0763 249517

NEXT MONTH...

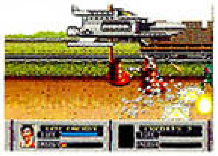
- Where will *Streets of Rage 2* and *Road Rash 2* appear in next month's Top 100?
- Will you find that bargain cart you've been looking for, through our readers' ads?
- Which classic games will be given the past master treatment?

Find out in the February issue of MEGA – on sale Thursday 21 January

So, here they are, the games which haven't made it into the Top 100 – indeed all the games which have ever been released for the Mega Drive. Each game has a MEGA rating: three – still worth checking out, two – well, if you're desperate, one – on your head be it!

AIR DIVER
A first person perspective shoot-'em-up. Good fun, but not for very long . ⊗⊗

ALEX KIDD IN THE ENCHANTED CASTLE
Alex breaks out from the Master System onto the Mega Drive. Samey platform cutie action that's not really recommended. ⊗⊗

ALIEN STORM


A coin-op conversion, which loses the two-player version on its way across. Slimy shoot-'em-up action that gets more than a bit boring after a while. ⊗

ALTERED BEAST
One of the first games ever for your Mega Drive, and its age is beginning to show. Samey gameplay, and its general easiness don't much help matters. ⊗
TO SWAP: *Altered Beast*
Swap – 081 578 2671
Swap plus money – 0302 743 9655
Swap/£10 – 0297 60232

ARCH RIVALS
Basketball with violence – basketbrawl if you like. Beat up your opponents, but make sure you score some points as well. ⊗⊗

ARROW FLASH
Boring seen-it-done-it-bought-the-game-type shoot-'em-up with nothing of real interest to anyone. ⊗

ART ALIVE
Sega get all serious with this *edutainment* paint program. No zoom-in, save facility or fun to be had from this one. ⊗
TO SWAP: *Art Alive*
Swap plus money – 0302 743 9655

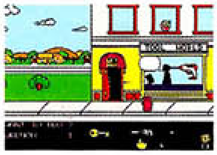
ASSAULT SUIT LEYNOS
An eight stage scrolly shoot-'em-up. Good fun and nice graphics, but it's too tough for its own good. ⊗⊗

ATOMIC ROBOKID
Nice playing shoot-'em-up with good graphics. It's playable, but it's not going to set the world alight. ⊗⊗⊗

ATOMIC RUNNER
Very nice looking shoot-'em-up, but it's too samey and very difficult to control. Try before you buy. ⊗⊗⊗

AXIS FX
A dodgy overhead shoot-'em-up which doesn't quite work. Nice weird graphics though. ⊗⊗

BACK TO THE FUTURE 3
Very poor. Just goes to show that crap films make for even crappier games. Boring, unplayable and it's got Michael J Fox in it. ⊗

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS


Nice arcade adventure game that suffers from being a bit dull. Bart fans and young kids will love it though. ⊗⊗⊗

BATTLE GOLFER
This is a very strange game. Shoot your ball in this arcade adventure and enter the next, even stranger, level. ⊗⊗⊗

BATTLE MASTER
More RPG action from the States. Not very inspiring, and very samey. Invest in something like *Shining in the Darkness* instead. ⊗

BEAST WARRIORS (BEAST WRESTLER)
Very poor wrestling game not helped by the terrible graphics and sound. Unplayable and boring. ⊗

BIMINI RUN
A fun little shoot-'em-up set on a boat. Very James Bond-ish, so if you liked Live and Let Die, you'll love this. ⊗⊗⊗

BONANZA BROS.
Fun two-player romp around a building collecting treasure, but it's a bit samey and slow. Definitely one for arcade fans only. ⊗⊗

BURNING FORCE
Oh dear it's shoot-'em-up time again. It's been done a thousand times before and better to boot. ⊗

CADASH
A mixture of RPG and slash-'em-up, which doesn't quite come off. Nice graphics and sound, but the action is a bit slow. ⊗⊗

CALIBRE .50
A horrible little game this one. Very similar to *Mercs*, but nowhere near as good. It's got nob graphics, nob sound and (you've guessed it) nob playability. ⊗

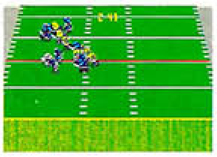
CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE AVENGERS
Superheroes on your Mega Drive. Yeaaahh! Shame it's too easy really. Nice fun in two-player mode though. Check it out. ⊗⊗

CENTURION: DEFENDER OF ROME
Oh god! Yawn city this one. War simulations aren't exactly stimulating at the best of times, but this is boredom beyond belief. ⊗

CURSE
This game has nothing going for it at all. A shoot-'em-up with horrible graphics and even worse sound. ⊗

CRACK DOWN
This is another coin-op conversion. It's a cross between *Gauntlet* and a shoot-'em-up. Search through the mazes, rescue the hostages, and then get out. ⊗⊗

CRUE BALL
Originally called *Twisted Flipper*, this heavy metal pinball game is good, but compared to *Dragon's Fury*, it isn't very good at all. ⊗⊗

CYBERBALL


Dull, uninteresting and slow. Steer clear of this futuristic American Football game. ⊗⊗
TO SWAP: *Cyberball*
Swap/£15 – 0297 60232
Swap/£15 – 0952 261823

DANGEROUS SEED
Very small (visually) shoot-'em-up that's too messy to be any good. ⊗

DARK CASTLE
Appalling platform game that shows just how bad games can be if you put your mind to it. ⊗

DARIUS 2: SAGAIA
Coin-op shoot-'em-up time again, but this one is too old hat to be any good. Reasonable graphics and quite playable, just not tough enough. ⊗⊗

DARWIN 4081
Very nice looking shoot-'em-up with some strange visuals. Easy to play, but hard to get through. ⊗⊗⊗

DEVILISH
Breakout with a difference. Use your two pads (yes two) to battle it out against an evil force. Intriguing, playable and not bad looking. ⊗⊗⊗

DICK TRACY

Very comic book in its gaming, and some would say this shoot-'em-up isn't that original. Good fun though. ⊗⊗⊗
TO SWAP: *Dick Tracy*
Swap/£20 – 0297 60232

DINO LAND
The first pinball game, and it's fading away fast. Dull, too cute for its own good, and nowhere near as good as *Dragon's Fury*. ⊗

DJ BOY
Urgh! This is a horrible game. It's a beat-'em-up on roller skates, it looks awful, it's years old, and it plays like a broken Frisbee. ⊗

DOUBLE DRAGON
It's just like the coin-op – boring old predictable crap that you can finish in about twenty minutes. ⊗

DOUBLE DRAGON 2
And you thought that the original was bad. Well, this is even worse. Let's hope *Double Dragon 3* is better than this. ⊗

DYNAMITE DUKE
More coin-op fun. A left to right scroller in which you must take out everything on screen before it hits you. ⊗

ELEMENTAL MASTER
A nice overhead shoot-'em-up that's very difficult to finish, and these days that's a godsend. ⊗⊗⊗

EARNEST EVANS
The cart version of the CD game. Everything is the same except for the sound. Pity the game's nob then, isn't it? ⊗

EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S REAL DEAL BOXING
You would think people would have learned by now that boxing is crap on any computer or console. Give it up lads. ⊗

EXILE
Slice 'n' dice arcade/RPG action that doesn't gel very well. It looks good and sounds nice too, but there's not enough action or strategy to get to grips with. ⊗

F1 GRAND PRIX
Very similar to *F1 Circus*, but the game doesn't offer the same playability. It's a nice game to begin with, but it soon fades after a while. ⊗⊗
TO SWAP: *F1 Grand Prix*
Swap plus money – 0302 7439655

FAERY TALE ADVENTURE
A stale role playing game that doesn't ever get exciting. It is indeed a thoroughly boring game. ⊗

FANTASIA
Make an amazing looking game, but make the playability crap. That about sums up *Fantasia*. ⊗
TO SWAP: *Fantasia*
Swap plus money – 0302 7439655

FASTEST ONE
Another racing game. Same view as *Super Monaco GP*, but plays terribly. Makes you despair, doesn't it? ⊗

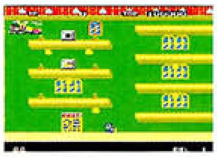
FATAL LABYRINTH
A nice search and find game, but it's just too easy. ⊗

FATMAN (SLAUGHTER SPORT – MONDU'S FIGHT PALACE)
Three names, same game. A one-on-one beat-'em-up with weird characters and even weirder moves. Not bad, but no *Street Fighter 2*. ⊗⊗

FERRARI GRAND PRIX
Another *Super Monaco GP* clone and again not as good. Loadsa tracks and nice graphics, but lacks that realistic touch. ⊗⊗

FIGHTING MASTERS
Another one-on-one beat-'em-up. Fight against monsters to save your planet and win survival. Nice plot, shame about the game. ⊗

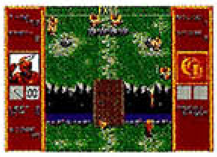
FIRE MUSTANG
Appalling graphics and sound, not to mention the gameplay. ⊗

FLICKY


A cute puzzle game with appalling graphics and sound. If you can overcome that though, you might enjoy this. ⊗⊗

FORGOTTEN WORLDS
A good, but strange, two-player game with some nice visuals. It's worth a look. ⊗⊗⊗

GAIARES
The names get stranger and so do the games. Nice looking but not a very inspiring game. ⊗⊗
TO SWAP: *Gaiares*
Swap plus money – 0302 7439655

GAIN GROUND


Strange strategy/shoot-'em-up game in which you must rescue all the hostages and then get to the exit. The slow pace makes for hard work. ⊗⊗

GALAHAD
Very nice looking platform/search game, but each level is very similar to the last one and the action is very thin on the ground. ⊗⊗

GALAXY FORCE 2
A direct Sega coin-op conversion of this 3D space shoot-'em-up. A disgusting 3D effect and samey action make this a game to avoid. ⊗

GHOSTBUSTERS
Take the characters from the movie and put them in a platform game. Nice sprites, but there's nothing else of interest. ⊗⊗

GRANADA X
Short and snappy shoot-'em-up that's only four short levels long. Nice in every way apart from that though. ⊗⊗

GREENDOG
Nice looking surfing related platform game. High on looks, but low on playability and challenge. ⊗⊗

GROWL (RUNARK)
Rescue the animals and beat up the guys who are holding them captive. Eco-friendly, or what? ⊗⊗

GYNOUG
More shoot-'em-up action from Sega. Nice graphics and very slick, but we've seen it all before. ⊗⊗

HARDBALL
Baseball. Ah, baseball. Know it well, because every console version I've ever played is tedious and crap. ⊗

HARD DRIVIN'

More coin-op hilarity in this 3D racing sim. Shame it's too slow and very blocky. ⊗⊗
TO SWAP: *Hard Drivin'*
Swap plus money – 0302 7439655

HEAVY NOVA
Another CD conversion and again the only difference is the sound. Don't even bother having a go though, because it's just another crap beat-'em-up. ⊗

HEAVY UNIT
Same old story, bland shoot-'em-up with some nice power ups, but nothing else. Go elsewhere for your shooting action. ⊗⊗

Turn over

TOP 100

HOME ALONE
Tedium, tedium and then some more tedium. That's what the film was all about, and the game's worse. ⊗

INSECTOR X
Better-than-average shoot-'em-up with some lovely sprites. Worth a look. ⊗⊗⊗

ISHIDO: THE WAY OF THE STONES
The Mega Drive version of an ancient Chinese puzzle game called Shanghai. If you don't know how to play it, steer well clear. ⊗⊗⊗

JAMES BOND: THE DUEL

Very garish platform game that's just too dull and slow to play. Nice looks don't make a good game. Beware. ⊗⊗

JAMES "BUSTER" DOUGLAS BOXING
Called *Final Blow* in the arcades, and all you had to do to win was bash those buttons and move that joystick. Same rules apply here. Boring. ⊗

JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL
Sega's first attempt at American Football. Sorry lads – horrible to play, unrealistic and we've got *John Madden* anyway. ⊗

JORDAN VS BIRD
The first serious EA sports cock-up. Three separate games, but they've all got the life span of something which doesn't have a very long lifespan. ⊗

JUNCTION
Another puzzle game. Nice graphics and addiction make it worth a look. ⊗⊗⊗

KA-GE-KI (FISTS OF STEEL)
A strange beat-'em-up with the emphasis on comedy. Massive heads on small bodies and all that. Quite funny for ten minutes, but the game's crap. ⊗

KING SALMON
A fishing sim. Might be good, but the game is completely Japanese and as such is completely unplayable. Wait for an official version or an American import. ⊗

KINGS BOUNTY

If you like your RPGs big and bland, then this is for you. There's loads to do, but not much to see (or hear for that matter). ⊗⊗⊗

FOR SALE: *Kings Bounty*
£15 – 071 834 4644

LAKERS VS CELTICS
EA's first basketball game. It's not that bad, but *Bulls vs Lakers* and *Team USA Basketball* are much better. ⊗⊗⊗

LAST BATTLE
Urgh! One of the worst games out there. It's slow, horrible to look at, and the sound is truly dire. And that's just the loading screen. Avoid. ⊗

TO SWAP: *Last Battle*
Swap/Offers – 0332 662789

M1 ABRAMS BATTLE TANK
If you like 3D tank simulations, you'll love this one, because it's the only one on the market. ⊗⊗⊗

MAGICAL MR TALUROOT
Another cute platform game from Japan. Easy to get through and quite playable if you like that sort of thing. ⊗⊗

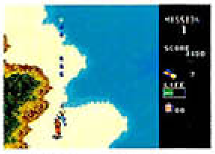
MARVEL LAND
Cuteness in the extreme, but very playable with it. Large play area and there are even some tricky routes to be found. ⊗⊗⊗

MARBLE MADNESS
An ancient fun coin-op, and the game is fun too. But with only six levels, it won't take too long to master. ⊗⊗

MARIO LEMIEUX HOCKEY
Sega try again to beat EA at their own game and fail miserably. The side-on view is nice, but the playability stinks. Stick to *NHLPA Hockey*. ⊗⊗

MASTER OF MONSTERS
A strategy game with monsters. Not very inspiring and not really recommended.
⊗⊗

MEGA PANEL
Tetris in Australia about sums this one up. Frantic two-player action keeps the game alive. ⊗⊗⊗

MERCS


A straight Commando rip-off, but there's so much in here and it's so well done that you can forgive any lack of originality. ⊗⊗⊗

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE
Nice arcade action with your usual Macho-man action. Fans of the coin-op need only apply. ⊗⊗⊗

MIKE DITKA POWER FOOTBALL
More American Football that falls short of the standard (*John Madden*). Nice graphics and an attempt at realism, but not very playable. ⊗⊗

TO SWAP: *Mike Ditka Football*
Swap plus money – 0302 7439655

MOONWALKER
Sorry, but Michael Jackson-related games are not my idea of a good time. Besides, it's samey and dull platform action that we've seen loadsa times before. ⊗⊗

TO SWAP: *Moonwalker*
Swap plus £5 – 0204 592758

MS. PACMAN
Why this *Pac Man* rip-off ever appeared on the Mega Drive is a mystery. Two-colour graphics and boring gameplay kill this one off. ⊗

MUSHA ALESTE
Nothing to separate this one from the crowd, so buy this only if you live for shoot-'em-ups (and don't we all). ⊗⊗⊗

MYSTIC DEFENDER
An OK beat-'em-up that gets better the more you get into it. Check it out if you're after something different. ⊗⊗⊗

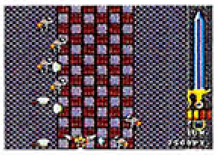
ONSLAUGHT
This is a very sad game indeed. Very messy to look at and any playability that might be here just doesn't get to see the light of day. ⊗⊗

OUT RUN
The coin-op was fun because it had an hydraulic chair that shoved you about. The Mega Drive version doesn't. What it does have is crap graphics and zero longevity. ⊗

PAC-MANIA
If you're looking for *Pac Man* action, then you've come to the right place. Spot on arcade graphics and classic maze play to boot. ⊗⊗⊗

PAPERBOY
Yes, another coin-op comes to the Mega Drive. Again, the graphics are spot on, but then the coin-op was out in 1983. Samey play and it's too dated by today's standards. ⊗

PHANTASY SOLDIER 3
Very hard to track this one down, but if you manage to, butt it. Fabulous platform action with lovely visuals. ⊗⊗⊗

PHELIOS


Strange shoot-'em-up let down by the fact that you can select your levels. The graphics are poor too. ⊗⊗

POWERBALL
Very similar to *Speedball 2*, but it just isn't good enough to make the grade. Try again. ⊗⊗

PREDATOR 2
A nice film-related shoot and explore game, but it's just way too easy. Shame really, because the graphics are nice and there are stills from the film. ⊗

QUAD CHALLENGE (FOUR TRAX)
Two-player racing game on (you've guessed it) Quads (four-wheel buggys). Nob graphics and playability mean it's no fun though. ⊗⊗

RBI 3 BASEBALL
Baseball with stats on. That's *RBI 3*. ⊗⊗

RBI 4 BASEBALL
Baseball with more stats on. That's *RBI 4*. ⊗⊗

RAIDEN TRAD
Another coin-op shoot-'em-up and the sheer lack of originality means boredom sets in really quickly. ⊗

RAMBO 3
For the first time, a game that's better than the film. If you like fast paced shoot-'em-up action, check this out. ⊗⊗⊗

FOR SALE: *Rambo 3*
£15 – 071 834 4644

RASTAN SAGA 2
Rope-dangling hack 'n' slash game that takes a while to get used to. A poor second to *Golden Axe*. ⊗⊗

RINGSIDE ANGEL
Female wrestling (yeaahh)! Nice idea, but let down by the lack of moves available. ⊗⊗

RINGS OF POWER
Big (sorry, VERY BIG) RPG. If you like interactive searching games, then this is your type of thing. You've been warned. ⊗⊗⊗

ROAD BLASTERS
Out Run with a gun. That's what this is all about. Race along future roads and take out anything that gets in your path. Yes you've guessed it, it's coin-op conversion time again. ⊗⊗

SAINT SWORD
More hack 'n' slash action with some nice backgrounds but terrible animation. Not the worst game in the world. ⊗⊗

SHADOW BLASTERS
Scrolling beat-'em-up which is very similar to *Mystic Defender* only much, much worse. Don't bother. ⊗

SHADOW OF THE BEAST
Nice looking search/platform game, but with a dodgy control system and a serious lack of action, you could die of boredom very quickly. ⊗

SHOVE IT
Subtitled *The Warehouse Game*, this is shelf-stacking on your console. If you know someone who works at Tesco, then this if for you. ⊗⊗

SKY SHARK (FIRE SHARK)
More vertically-scrolling shooting as you pilot your bi-plane through ten incredibly easy levels. Nice to play, but too easy. ⊗⊗

TO SWAP: *Fire Shark*
Swap plus money – 0302 7439655

SMASH TV
How do you turn a brilliant action-packed coin-op into a dull, crap console game? Ask the programmers of *Smash TV*? ⊗

TO SWAP: *Smash TV*
Swap plus money – 0302 7439655

SOL-DEACE
Another CD conversion. The sound has gone, but the game is still here. Just proves how crap the current CD software is. ⊗

SPACE HARRIER 2
A fast 3D action shoot-'em-up. Nice graphics, but each level is just the same as the last one. Not very original. ⊗⊗

SPACE INVADERS '90
The classic *Space Invaders* gets a face life and some new add-ons. It's fun for a while, but gets repetitive and boring. ⊗⊗

SPLATTERHOUSE 2
If you like gory games, you'll love this. Get through eight levels to rescue your girlie. Bland gameplay and not enough skill kills this one off. ⊗

STAR CRUISER
Nice looking, but unplayable because of the Japanese question and answer section at the end of each level. ⊗

STARFLIGHT
Space exploration is the name of the game, and if you like that sort of thing, fine. Others will find it very slow and tedious. ⊗⊗

TO SWAP: *Starflight*
Swap plus money – 0302 7439655

STEEL EMPIRE
Very nice looking shoot-'em-up that's very good to play, and you'll get really far on your first go. In fact you'll finish it. ⊗

STORMLORD

Very cutesy looking search/platform game that suffers from being too awkward to control and to play. The sequel should be better. ⊗

STREET SMART
A one-on-one beat-'em-up that tries to be *Street Fighter 2*, but fails on graphics, sound and playability. ⊗

SUPER AIRWOLF (CROSS FIRE)
Fast paced, classy shoot-me-up that's quite tough too. Shame there's nothing special hiding in here. ⊗⊗

SUPER HIGH IMPACT
American Football for people who can get to grips with the rules. Easy to play, but just as easy to put away too. ⊗⊗

SUPER HYDLIDE
Very complex RPG that's way above my head. Nice looking and very deep, so RPG fans should check it out. ⊗⊗

SUPER LEAGUE BASEBALL
The first baseball game for the Mega Drive, but with other like *Sports Talk* and *Hardball* around, this really isn't worth mentioning. ⊗

SUPER OFF ROAD
A faithful coin-op version, but that also means that when you've done all the tracks you've finished the game. ⊗⊗

SUPER REAL BASKETBALL
Same story as *Super League Baseball*. This was OK, when it first came out but games like *Bulls vs Lakers* and *Team USA Basketball* have surpassed it. ⊗⊗

SUPER REAL VOLLEYBALL
This was crap when it first came out and thankfully no one has tried to program another volleyball game since. ⊗

SUPER THUNDERBLADE
A terrible coin-op doesn't make a good Mega Drive game. Exhibit A is *Super Thunderblade*. Get the message? ⊗

TO SWAP: *Super Thunderblade*
Swap/Offers – 0332 662789

SWORD OF SODAN
A dreadful Amiga hack-'em-up that doesn't add anything in the port over process. Stay away. ⊗

TO SWAP: *Sword of Sodan*
091 237 1102

SYD OF VALIS (VARIS SD)
Cute platform game about a magic ice-cream that turns into a sword. Don't worry, the game is as crap as the plot. ⊗

TECHNOCOP
Take two games, mix them together and you get Technocop – a racing game and a platform game. Nice idea, crap execution. ⊗

TASK FORCE HARRIER EX
More overhead, vertical shooting action. some of the power-ups are impressive, but the rest is all old territory. ⊗

THUNDER FOX
A dire coin-op that should have been given a decent burial. Very *Rolling Thunder*, but nowhere near as good. ⊗

THUNDER PRO WRESTLING
Wrestling games are generally crap, and it's nice to know that the Japanese are keeping up the tradition. ⊗

TIGER HELI
A cute, helicopter shoot-'em-up/maze game. Work through the level to

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Aero Blasters	15	LHX Attack Chopper	26
Afterburner 2	45	Lotus Turbo Challenge	24
Alien 3	79	Might and Magic	84
Alisia Dragoon	100	New Zealand Story	48
Aquatic Games	55	NHLPA Hockey	3
Arcus Odyssey	63	Olympic Gold	52
Arnold Palmer Golf	75	PGA Tour Golf	12
Batman	99	Phantasy Star 2	34
Battle Squadron	54	Phantasy Star 3	14
Bio-Hazard Battle	56	Pit Fighter	32
Blockout	57	Populous	29
Buck Rodgers	47	Quackshot	8
Budokan	86	Rainbow Islands	11
California Games	85	Revenge of Shinobi	20
Castle of Illusion	25	Road Rash	10
Chuck Rock	66	Rolling Thunder 2	96
Columns	39	Shadow Dancer	38
Corporation	72	Shining in the Darkness	33
Darius 2	83	Side Pocket	23
David Robinson Basketball	59	Sonic The Hedgehog	9
Decap Attack	27	Sonic The Hedgehog 2	2
Desert Strike	17	Speedball 2	31
Dodgeball	62	Spiderman	71
Dragon's Fury	51	Sports Talk Baseball	61
El Viento	93	Star Control	69
ESWAT	37	Streets Of Rage	7
European Club Soccer	90	Strider	36
F-1 Circus	58	Super Airwolf	92
F-22 Interceptor	35	Super Hang-On	60
Fatal Rewind	91	Super Monaco GP 2	5
Fighting Masters	65	Sword of Vermillion	13
Gadget Twins	95	Talmit's Adventure	98
Games – Winter Challenge	77	Taz-Mania	21
Ghouls 'n' Ghosts	28	Team USA Basketball	49
Gley Lancer	76	Terminator	43
Golden Axe 2	16	Test Drive 2	73
Grand Slam Tennis	94	Tetris	67
Hellfire	4	Thunderforce 2	88
Herzog Zwei	70	Thunderforce 3	46
Immortal, The	82	Thunderforce 4	18
James Pond	80	Toe Jam & Earl	30
James Pond 2 – Robocod	22	Trouble Shooter	74
Jewel Master	97	Truxton	50
Joe Montana 2	64	Turrican	89
Joe Montana 3	41	Twinkle Tale	81
John Madden Football '93	1	Two Crude Dudes	44
Kid Chameleon	40	World Class Leaderboard	53
Klax	78	World of Illusion	19
Krusty's Super Fun House	42	Zero Wing	87

meet up with the boss. Good fun, but its age is showing. ⊗⊗⊗

TODD'S ADVENTURES IN SLIME WORLD

Slow, unresponsive and green. Don't the programmers know the Mega Drive can show 64 colours on screen at once? ⊗

TOKI

Slow, boring platform action that isn't that much fun, and it's too easy as well. The end-of-level bosses pose a problem, but not for long. ⊗⊗

TORA! TORA!

Very familiar shoot-'em-up. You've seen it all before. ⊗⊗

TURBO OUT RUN

Terrible graphics, horrible sound and dull gameplay make this even worse that the original *Out Run*. It's that bad. ⊗

TRAMPOLINE TERROR

A strange set-the-bomb-and-teleport puzzle game with some nice cartoony graphics. Have a look before you pay your dosh. ⊗⊗

TRAYSIA

More character-related role playing from America. Hard to get to grips with and not very rewarding at all. ⊗

TWIN COBRA

Another overhead, vertical scrolling shoot-'em-up. Why do they keep making these, we've got more than enough? ⊗

TWIN HAWK

And here's another one. Boring, boring, boring..... ⊗

ULTIMATE TIGER

Boring shoot-'em-up. The only decent thing about this game is the title, and that's not exactly brill, is it? ⊗

UNDEADLINE

Another vertical scrolling shoot-'em-up, but this one has got some original touches. Nice scenery and imaginative baddies make for a fun, tough game. ⊗⊗

TO SWAP: *Undeadline*
Swap plus money – 0302 743 9655

VALIS

The first of the Valis series. Buy *Valis 3* instead. ⊗

VALIS 3

Nice looking and playable hack-'em-up that gets really tough the further you get. ⊗⊗⊗

TO SWAP: *Valis 3*
(Jap) Swap plus £4 – 0204 592758

VAPOR TRAIL

Another coin-op conversion of a vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up. Someone send these guys some originality pills. ⊗

VERYTEX

Very nice shoot-'em-up with some really big end guardians and some impressive parallax scrolling. Check it out. ⊗⊗⊗

VOLFIED (ULTIMATE QIX)

A classic puzzle game in which you must cover a certain amount of the screen using a line. Good to play, but it can get a bit dull. ⊗⊗⊗

WANI WANI WORLD

Also known as *Croc World*, this cute bash-'em-ladders game makes a change from the usual Mega Drive stuff. ⊗⊗⊗

WARDNER

A boring *Alex Kidd* platform game. Nice sound, but nowt else. ⊗

WARDNER SPECIAL

This shoot-'em-up is not at all like Wardner. Very nice and very playable. Worth a peek. ⊗⊗⊗

WARRIOR OF ROME (AMBITION OF CAESAR)

Real-time war simulations I can do without, but this is very big, very hard to get into and for fans(?) only. ⊗

WARRIOR OF ROME 2

Even bigger than its predecessor, this one is just as hard to get into. I'd rent it if I were you. ⊗⊗

WARRIORS OF THE ETERNAL SUN

Real *Dungeons & Dragons* action on your Mega Drive. Good character control and nice graphics make for a decent RPG. ⊗⊗

WARSONG

A silly plot and a tricky fighting and control system make this RPG very tough to get through. Try something else. ⊗

FOR SALE: *Warsong*
£15 – 071 834 4644

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

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YOU WON

Don't bother with this quiz game, just get yourself the Trivial Pursuits board game. It's much more fun. ⊗

WHERE IN TIME IS CS?

Another *edutainment* title. Chase after Carmen Sandiego by figuring out the clues and travelling to the right places. The idea's different, but with 80 samey missions it's not exactly a game, is it? ⊗⊗

WHIP RUSH

Changeable scrolling (often mid-level) makes this a game a bit of a novelty, *and* it has the action too. ⊗⊗⊗

WONDERBOY 3: MONSTER LAIR

A garish shoot-'em-up showing how many cute colours the Mega Drive has. Slow, and very samey. ⊗

WONDERBOY 5 IN MONSTERWORLD

A mix of platform arcade action and role playing. Good in the short-term, but you might have problems getting through it. ⊗⊗

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90

A horrible football game and one that doesn't even deserve talking about, so I won't bother. ⊗

TO SWAP: *World Cup Italia '90*
021 745 505

WORLD CUP '92

A coin-op conversion that was good fun in the arcades. There are no individual moves, just hit those buttons as fast as you can. ⊗⊗

WRESTLE WAR

A nice wrestling game that should keep fans quiet for a while, but only for a short while. Not enough moves or enough opponents. ⊗⊗

XENON 2

Slow but nice looking shoot-'em-up. It might be hot stuff on the Amiga, but the Mega Drive has better. ⊗

XDR

Don't really have any idea what this game is all about, but it does exist. Call the number below, if you're really interested. ⊗

SWAP: XDR
(Jap) Swap plus £4 – 0204 592758

Y'S 3: WANDERERS FROM Y'S

More complicated role-playing action. Deep and involving, but if you can handle it, it's definitely worth checking out. ⊗⊗

ZANY GOLF

Crazy golf may be alright in Blackpool on a summer's afternoon, but on your Mega Drive it fails miserably. Not funny. ⊗

ZOOM

A 3D puzzle game in which you need to ring the squares while avoiding the enemy. Good for a bit. ⊗⊗

1943

Another coin-op conversion of an overhead war-time shoot-'em-up. Been there, seen it and done it all already. ⊗

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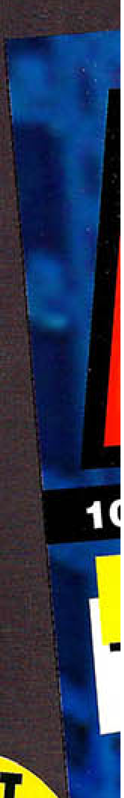

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- The formula behind EASN's jock strappin' sports masterpieces
- MEGA's argument-inducing, pint-spilling Top 100 Mega Drive games
- Over 60 Mega Drive game tips
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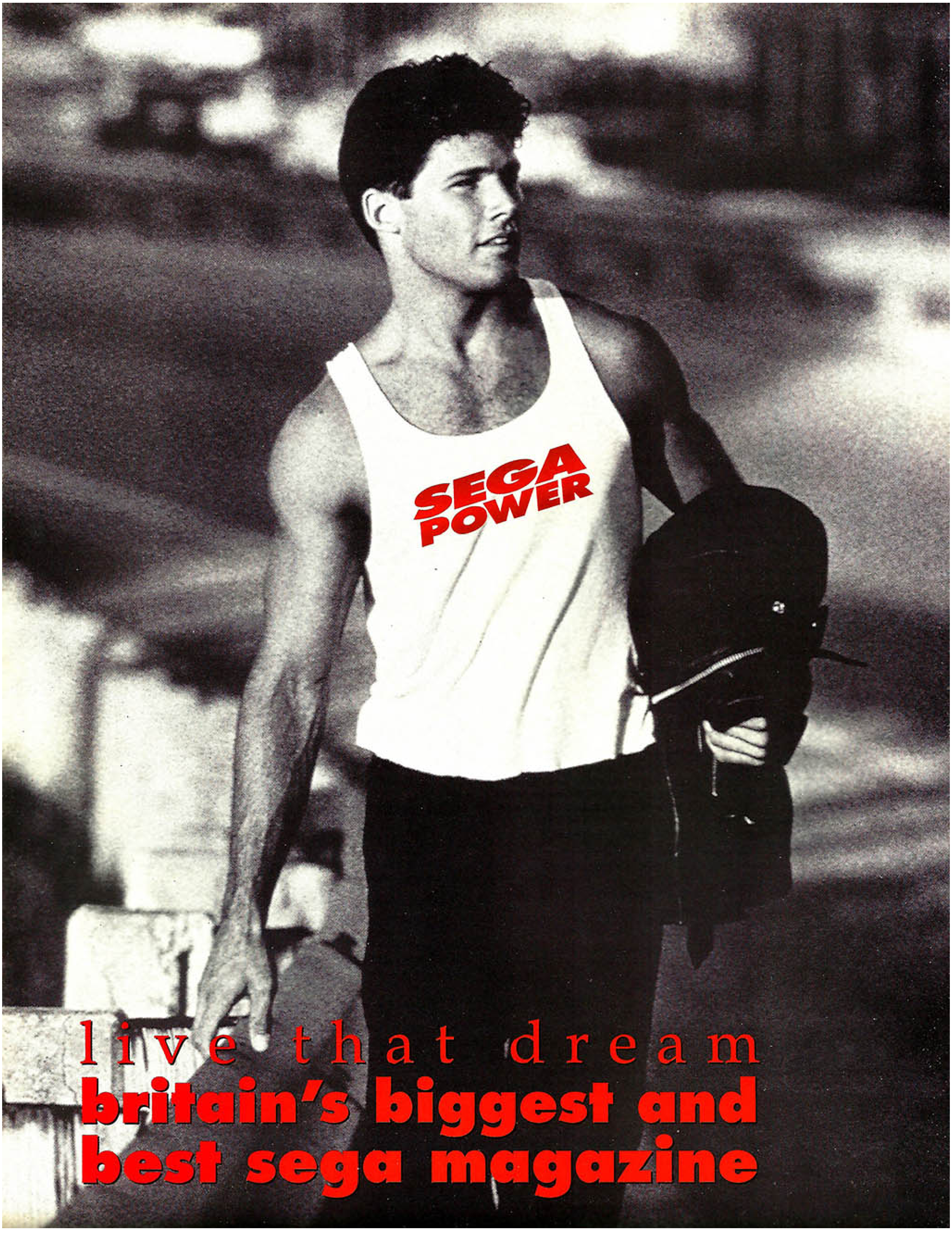
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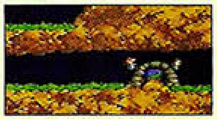
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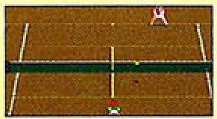
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***Two* copies of MEGA on TV in just one month – quite a result, we're sure you'll agree. But everyone's a winner on the (ahem) "Everyone's A Winner" page. And here it is...**

EVERYONE'S A WINNER!

Mega TV Stardom

We can't believe it finally happened, but happen it did. Domark (those generous people stupid enough to cough up for the Skull 'n' Crossbones coin-op first prize) reckoned that they would have a good few months of playing pirates and swashing their buckles before they'd have to give it away.

But unfortunately, it was not to be. Both *J Anderson* from Wokingham and *Tony Eaton* from Stafford came up with the goods. Congratulations go to them both, but the prizes go to J Anderson, because his video tape arrived in the MEGA office three days before Tony's did.

Tony was one of the finalists at the 1992 National Computer Game Championships at the Future Entertainment Show – he sneaked a copy of MEGA on stage while being interviewed by Andy Crane. How Mr Anderson managed to get his issue two so conveniently on a desk in camera shot, however, remains a mystery.

But have no fear, TV stardom seekers, the competition is back. Yep, we're after more MEGA TV appearances, so if you fancy your chances, cut a quick dash to page 106. We may not have a coin-op to give away yet, but we're working on it.

Second place: Tony Eaton's trusty issue one on ITV's Bad Influence!

WINNER
by just
THREE
days

First place: For getting issue two of MEGA on Coast to Coast, J Anderson wins a coin-op, an American football and, erm, signed photos of Saint and Greavsie

THE IMMACULATE COMPETITION

There was loads of response to this competition. The readers who sent in the best suggestions for features to be included in future editions of MEGA won some fabby Virgin (or Voi-gin, as they probably don't say in the USA) jackets and T-shirts. The posters have already been sent out, so if you don't have one, you didn't win. Here are the lucky winners...

Simon Pilgrow, Essex; Tony Field, Newbury; William Nicklas, Midlothian; Mark Judge, Lancs; Ian Gillat, Rotherham; John Porter, Weston-Super-(night)Mare; Sabu Felix, Middlesex; Jon Gould, Stourbridge; Tom Ash, Bingley; Paul Setterfield, Shepperton; Paul Brazier, Liverpool; Ronnie Karim, Glasgow; Mark Hides, Sheffield; Michael Wyles, Torquay.

Lard Boy

Danny "not so lardy any more" Curley – he's losing weight, *fast!*

Bit rude this competition, really. Poor old Danny Curley oop thur in Mon-chaster, quietly getting on with his own business, is thoroughly undeserving of some evil gits in Bath starting to call him Lard Boy. But we did, and you lot sent in your estimates of his weight and now we present a winner – ***Adam Patrick*** from ***Kent***. We're not saying how much Curley weighs, but we can confirm that he's recently lost over 17lbs. The power of the press eh? Cheers Danny!

WHAT DO TIPS MEAN? PRIZES!

And the best 25 Mega Drive game tips won Game Genies from Hornby. Here are the lucky winners:

Stuart Wenham, Kent; Chester Greenidge, London; Brian George, Portsmouth; Nigel Giles, Bolton; R Ellis, London; Paul West, Scarborough; Matthew Morgan, Pillowell; Oliver Whateley, Huntingdon; Darren Caldwell, Stockton-on-Tees; Iain Laird, Chesterfield; Abdul Mye Rashid, London; Paul Setterfield, Shepperton; Robert Dalgarnd, Sussex; T Wood, Buxton; Martin O'Neill, Birmingham; Tony Underwood, Bolton; Jeff Iles, Bristol; Grant Hazell, Livingstone; Dawn Brown, W. Midlands; Mark Wood, Crawley; Robert Wilkinson, Hull; Dave Morris, St Helens; C L'Amie, Birmingham; Micheal Davey, Scunthorpe; Leigh Banforth, Surrey.

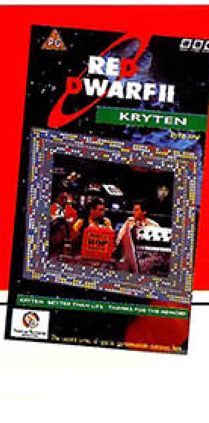
Galoob
GAME GENIE

The Game Genie – lovely

Red Dwarf Competition

Do you know someone who looks like Rimmer? *Ramases Niblick The Third, Kerplunk Kerplunk, Whoops! Where's My Thribble* doesn't, but he did send in a very funny letter explaining why he doesn't, which entertained the whole MEGA team for a good three seconds.

So, a T-shirt, some videos and a signed photo are on their way to Ramases etc, and we hope he's happy with them. In the meantime, we can all look forward to a new series of Red Dwarf starting soon.



Just one of the brill videos won buy Ramases

The Future Entertain Sh

Not only is Earls Court still recovering from the onslaught of over 50,000 videogamers, but the exhausted MEGA team still quiver at the mere mention of a video wall. So here's Andy Fox clutching a bullet-proof vest, a bargain copy of *Taz-Mania*, several tabloid newspapers and a story...

So what was the Future Entertainment Show really like? OK, so we know it was a huge video game show held at Earls Court, London, for four days in early November, but what was it like to actually be there?

Don't bother trying to find out from the national newspapers: after readin'-all-abart-it on Sunday 8 November, I can only assume that most reporters took one look at the queues to get in, decided they'd be better off down the pub and resorted to hackneyed old videogaming clichés. Here's the kind of stuff they barfed up.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY...

Daily Newspaper story number one: *"Shock-horror-phew-gotcha-etc... The people of Britain can no longer ignore the facts: it's official. Civilisation has collapsed! Bin your record collections! Switch off your MTV and turn on that console. Yep, it's time for the world to finally bow down to the new Messiah, Sega and his earthly incarnation, Sonic. Goodbye Jason Donovan, adios Philip Schofield and a resounding 'pants' to Martika – video games finally took over the world yesterday and we think it's fab."*

Alternatively, you could have got Daily Newspaper story number two: *"Video game-crazed youths rioted in a frantic brawl to get their next fix of Mario The Plumber and The Sonic Hedgehog in Earls Court yesterday. Brain-washed, violent, socially-reclusive children – victims addicted to the latest 'video game craze' drug imported from America and Japan – fought to get their hands on this evil new technology. Parents – you have been warned!"*

Hmmm. So what really happened? Well, "It'll blow your mind" was what Future Publishing trumpeted before the event and minds were duly blown, along with quite a few savings accounts. Somewhere in the region of 55,000 people piled through the doors of Earls Court to feast their eyes on the biggest gathering of game producers this country has ever witnessed, pick up a bargain or three, and watch the finals of the 1992 £20,000 National Video Games Championships. I have to admit, I didn't see any crazed kids wielding a Game Gear in one hand and an Uzi 9 mm in the other. What I did see was a lot of people having a superb time. How dull!

THE PUBLIC'S POINT OF VIEW...

Let's go from the beginning... Having queued outside for 15 minutes, I body-swerved a rather grim looking female security guard, drifted past the not so grim Daily Mirror girls and came to rest in front of Ocean's video wall. Flanked by two helter-skelters, this wall attacked the eyes and ears with equal venom – holding magical promise of what delights lay behind it (more video walls, actually).

Now the problem was where to go first; decisions, decisions. Virtual Reality? The Sega stand? The light-gun-totin' Quasar inflatable? The bar? Compare deltoids with WWF wrestler "Hacksaw" Jim Duggan? Normally I'd just follow the crowd, but this crowd wasn't moving in one direction – it was swarming, everywhere! I decided to check in at the Future stand, where I was told to "go and see what it's like out there". OK, fine. I then got involved in a very tricky business, namely walking in a straight line. In a huge crowd of people I seemed like the only one walking in exactly the opposite direction to everyone else. This Friday, it turned out, was a quiet day! Saturday and Sunday were to see the biggest queues ever experienced at Earls Court, with touts selling tickets at four times their face value.

> **"Contrary to popular belief, there were no kids wielding a Game Gear in one hand and an Uzi in the other"**

Radio One made an appearance, with Adrian Juste broadcasting live on Saturday, but nobody really seemed to notice them; there was simply too much going on of greater interest. ITV show Bad Influence! was there with camera crews, while Cicero and the Little Angels (well, a couple of them anyway) made guest appearances – but unfortunately I missed them too (ahem).

My lasting memory of the show is of the noise. When you get 15,000 people under one roof it's bound to be a bit noisy. But with Electronic Arts, Domark, Virgin, Sega, Nintendo, Radio One and two bloody great video walls competing for your attention, the biggest prizes go to those who can make the most noise.

Add to this the fact that the hall was full of box-shifters desperate to hold your attention long enough for you to ask if they take Visa or Access, and it's small wonder that The Ski Show in an adjacent hall was driven to reach for its decibel meter and declare us an official noise hazard. Needless to say, like troublesome neighbours we obliged and turned the volume down on our video wall, only to sneak it back up later on.

Having blagged a free ride on the dodgems, failed to win a *Road Rash 2* leather jacket on the EA stand, played *Sonic 2*, and acquainted myself with the bar (no, not free – although Neil did buy me a beer), I fought through the bargain-hunters to see what was for sale at what prices. All stand-holders reported healthy business, so it must have been a good day's shopping for you guys – I contented myself with a spanking new *Taz-Mania* cart.

But not everyone left the show with a considerably lighter wallet. Sunday saw the final of the National Video Games Championships. The winner, Allen Brett, picked up a cool ten grand for his trouble. £10,000 for playing games? Well, Future Publishing like to give something back to their readers every now and then. Schucks, it's only money (So you won't want paying for this piece then? – Neil)

Last Christmas was when it all started to really happen in the UK for Sega, and that other outfit whose name escapes me for the moment. The success of the Future Entertainment Show indicates that this Christmas will be even bigger in video game terms. Next year's show is already booked – at Olympia. See you lot there, and remember, leave those Uzis at home! Ⓜ

NEXT YEAR'S

Next year's Future Entertainment Show is already being planned. Don't worry... we'll let you know all about it nearer the time. In the meantime, keep practising that Mega Drive – next year the £10,000 first prize could be yours.

↙ WWF star "Hacksaw" Jim Duggan working up to a microphone-wibbling "HOOOOOO!"

↓ Don't try this at home, kids. This photo is the only evidence to date that video games are harmf

ment

ow

That's Adrian Juste from BBC Radio One, that is. Dunno what he's been drinking – or maybe he's just suffering from the same affliction as Neil...

Sonic has got the *groooooove.* But where's Tails? Probably getting yet more hassle from the bottom inspectors

Helter-skelters and a giant video wall (courtesy of Ocean, who *still* won't admit that *Addams Family* has been converted for Mega Drive) were the first sights to greet visitors at the Future Entertainment Show

MEGA's very own Neil West and Sega Power's Andy Smith host the finals, with Bad Influence! taking notes – then erm, throwing the notes hastily away. Bloody amateurs

Allen concentrates on the three competition events: *Streetfighter 2* on the SNES, *Sonic 2* on the Mega Drive and finally *Lemmings 2* on the Amiga

Tony Eaton (the eventual second place runner-up) meanwhile, has trouble keeping his Competition-Pro sports wig in place as the action hots up

"So then Mr Crane, what's the square root of 17832? What's the *real* difference between courgettes and cucumbers? And what do you get if you cross Joanna Lumley and a bull whip with three bags of compost?"
We ask the *big* questions

The UK's 1992 Video Game Champion Allen Brett picks up a cool ten grand for his trouble. £10,000 for playing games? Not a bad afternoon's work. And where's the money now? "In the bank," comes the quick reply. A sharp lad, no doubt – we'd have spent it on pizza

Sonic 2 and *World Of Illusion* drag in the crowds on the Sega stand. Elsewhere, Sonic and Tails parade around the show pursued by inquisitive (not to say "disturbed") punters trying to find out if Tails has two bums. Hmmm. It's an interesting conundrum of nature alright – an animal with two tails, it could mean anything – but it's not a question we'd feel especially comfortable posing to David Attenborough. Ahem. Let's move swiftly onto this rabble...

"Look at me! Hello mum! Stop pushing! Get off my foot! Ouch! %@£$!!! Take that! *BIFF*"

MEGA MOUTH

As editor of MEGA I get to do lots of interesting jobs. I shuffle papers around my desk, go out on company lunches and, best of all, answer your darling little letters. Keep them coming...

I WANT TO BE AN... ANIMATOR

Dear MEGA,
I am an 'A' Level student, studying (obviously) Art, Maths and General Studies.

I thought your first issue was great, and I was especially interested in your article on EASN or, to be more accurate, your section on "A Graphics Expert".

This is because I am currently gathering information on computer animation for an art essay (yes, you do have to write essays in art – silly isn't it?). I would, therefore, be very grateful for any information, in the form of names, addresses, phone numbers or pictures of top animators, also any information on the subject of computer animation itself.

My interest in computer animation does not just begin and end with my essay. I have always wanted to have a job as a computer animator. Unfortunately, little is known on the subject at my school or even at my local careers office. I know of only one college in the whole country which does a degree course in Computer Visualisation and Animation (and even that is "subject to approval").

So why not do a "Rough Guide to Careers" on computer animation in your Busman's Holiday section – including who to call and where to go. Better still, send the information to me.
Gareth Evans, Notts

Dear Gareth,
Running a computer animation feature in the mag wouldn't really be all that relevant to our readership. Unlike home computers, consoles cannot be used to produce computer animation. And what sort of computer animation do you want to know about? If it's computer games you're interested in, then your best bet is to phone a large software house and ask (very nicely) if you can have a chat with the programmers. If on the other hand you're talking about those fancy computer animations (like those used in the Smarties commercials), you'll need to get in touch with a big production company and speak to the animators there. Try contacting Rushes Production Company on 071 437 8676. ***Neil***

GARISH COLOURS

Dear MEGA,
What a nice magazine. I enjoyed looking at all the bright primary colours, which seem to fill all console games mags. Why are they (and yours) always so garish?

I suppose it's to attract our younger games playing friends. Also, the number of brackets with silly comments in them makes the magazine confusing to read.

Another confusing thing is the way the thing is laid out. *Streets of Rage* was mentioned on three different pages, 62, 70 and 74. Why not have them all on the same page under one heading in one colour?

Neeah this was all fields when I was a boy, I'm 85 bah humbug.

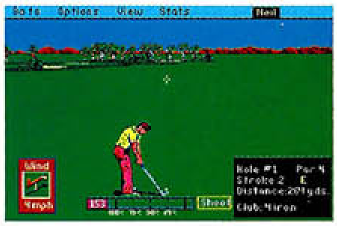
I will buy your next issue though.
Rupert Coulson, London

Dear Rupert,
You can't have too many bright colours... erm, and sorry about the silly bracketed comments (Wibbly-bibbly-scmibbly). What's more I'll give Amanda a good slapping for doing layout which doesn't appeal to you personally. I know, why don't we produce several versions of the mag, individually tailored to each of our reader's diverse tastes? Then again, maybe not. But your comments have been noted. ***Neil***

BEER, DRUGS AND BEAT-'EM-UPS

Dear MEGA Team,
On the cover of issue one of MEGA you announced your Top 100 games listing with a warning that it might spill pints. I didn't spill my pint, I spewed it... all over that offensive article, moments before liberally dousing your so-called games magazine with gasoline and setting it alight. I rescued your address from the warm ashes, unluckily for you, so that I could write and put you straight on a few things.

First, a question. Did the MEGA team indulge in constant use of mind-altering substances during the compilation of this list? If the answer is no, then I suggest a closer inspection of the free staff coffee.



This is *PGA Tour Golf*. It's good, but it's not the best game of all time

You listed 100 games in descending order, but I'll only concentrate on the ones with which I disagree most vehemently.

PGA Tour Golf is the only game that

MEGA STAR

FAIR IS FOUL

Dear MEGA,
Let's end once and for all the pointless debate: Why is Sonic's little fox friend called Tails? Because he's got more than one. If he had only one, he'd be called Tail, wouldn't he?

Who gives a fig anyway? *Sonic* is crap! Take away the fancy graphics and speed and you've got a fairly run-of-the-mill platform game. I got up to the spring yard zone on my first go; not that I'm boasting – it's just that easy. I haven't played it since, so therefore I've not completed it. (Is it really worth spending the time on?)

Programmers ought to put a little more thought into games: shoot-'em-ups rely more on luck than skill; platform games have repetitive patterns that are easily memorised; and I don't see the point of companies like Electronic Arts spending four years making one American Football game (*John Madden*) when only fans of the game are going to be impressed by it, or for that matter even begin to understand the rules.

Arcade conversions are OK as long as the original itself was good/popular. *Alien Storm* is an outstanding example, and I like the way that *Mercs* and *Super Hang-On* have different modes.

I owned a Commodore 64 for many years, and while arcade cons weren't always up to snuff, there was a wealth of original software. Check out the likes of *Elite, Wizball, Last Ninja* and *Impossible Mission* to name but four.

What I'm saying is don't let posh graphics and fancy sounds get in the way of gameplay!

Sorry for sounding off in such a bitter fashion. Anyway, keep up the good work (cliché 126) and all that tosh.
Mr Calvin Palmer, Durham

Dear Calvin,
I agree with much of what you say. I'm actually a big fan of *Sonic*, but it seems that almost everyone has a different view of his latest adventure. Still, if you hate it, that's fair enough.

You're right about fancy graphics often masking a crap game. My favourite game of all time was *Elite*, and all that eight bit stuff was (if not graphically brilliant) completely original and compelling to play. We too would like to see a bit more effort put into many Mega Drive games and we're glad to see that things are changing. Until recently console games consisted of beat-'em-ups, shoot-'em-ups, platform games and, er, that was it.

Now, however, people have realised that by putting a little extra thought into the control mechanism, there's absolutely no reason why you can't have flight sims, puzzle games, complex adventures and so on appearing on consoles. More and more PC, and home computer games are also coming across now and that's a damn good thing.

Your comment about *John Madden* was a bit poor though. Andy Dyer too doesn't have a clue about American Footy, but having played the game and read the manual, he's picking up the rules fairly quickly and finding the game a real hoot to play. Just because someone doesn't know about a sport or can't be bothered to read the manual doesn't mean a game won't be good. Still, thanks for your letter. I think perhaps you deserve a cart. ***Neil***

ALIENS

Dear Mega,
I was playing my Mega Drive a few days ago and got onto level seven on *Alien 3*, when without any warning the Mega Drive spun around eight times turned purple with red spots and said, "The galaxy is 1,000,000 the earth is 0.0006!"

Meanwhile, somewhere in outer Mongolia my twin brother asked a square frog the way to the M25.2.

By this time my Mega Drive was raving on about lemons and their magic field. I had crept out of the house to play a set of snooker with Zippy. When I got back, it had turned back to normal. But wait? What happened to *Alien 3?*
Samuel Lewis, Bristol

Dear Samuel,
We can't be sure, but we suspect that the copy of *Alien 3* didn't actually exist in the first place. Indeed, we might even be bold enough to suggest that this bizarre letter is actually just a ruse to get us to replace your "missing" *Alien 3* cart. We'd love to, but we can't, because our copy too suffered a similar fate (ie we didn't have a copy of the game in the first place, you scrounging git).

For being such an unsuccessfully devious little toad you win our Mega Moron prize. This month it is a small model of a toilet, since you're so full of it. ***Neil***

belongs there (though it rates a much higher position than ten). The rest belong only in the collection of a violently maladjusted sociopath and prune-eater – for example:

Number One – *John Madden Football*
American Football sim strictly for fanatics (what's a punt rush?). My rating – Number 70

Number Two – *EA Hockey*
Glorified violence for the mindless and sexually crippled. (Also called "The Generation Game", as in Random Score Generation Game). My rating – Number 96

Number Three – *Sonic The Hedgehog*
Satanic imagery combined with a sado-masochistic theme (they let kids play this?!). My rating – Number... etc...

It seems to me that your magazine pampers outrageously to the blood lust fantasies of malignant adolescents, parading page after page of "beat-'em-ups" and "shoot-'em-ups" and horrific full contact sport sims while relegating the more tranquil games (like *PGA Tour*) to a minority status they ill-deserve.

In closing, I'd like to suggest an idea for a new video game with a modification to the homicidal maniac theme evinced in games like *Road Rash* and *Hellfire*. I have no title as yet, but the game could be aptly described as a "string-'em-up". It involves several depraved members of a certain magazine's editorial staff, adequate lengths of rope and a willing hero.

I for one would violate my strong moral discipline to play such a game... quite frequently.
G Rushton, Chairman Slop-Bladder Prunes, Manchester

Dear G(it),
We don't subscribe to the use of mind-altering substances, but if you could find a substance that actually gives you a mind, we would suggest that you use it. Perhaps your letter was supposed to be amusing, but the threat of lynching people ain't really all that tittersome, is it? In the event of you coming up with some intelligently written, well thought out criticisms of the mag instead of the desperately contrived crap here, we will gladly respond. ***Neil***

IN THE SHADOWS

Dear MEGA MOUTH,
When I saw issue one of MEGA on the shelf I bought it because all new Mega Drive mags are worth trying if only once.

I must complement you on such a well thought out magazine. I really liked the *NHLPA Hockey* review because of the way you explained the good and bad points about the game. I would like to know what happened to *Shadow of the Beast*. I noticed that it wasn't in the Top 100, but it is in the shops.

Gorgeous graphics, but someone forgot to put in the gameplay

What is happening on page 25. You have put in a list of previews for September, but the magazine came out in October. Were they put in a previous magazine? If so, why didn't I find it?

Despite these points, I am looking forward to the second issue. Keep up the good work.

PS. Could you put me in touch with anyone who needs a spare pair of hands compiling a Mega Drive magazine.
M Smith, Hertfordshire

Dear M,
The Top 100 contains the "top" 100 games on the Mega Drive (as told by us) and the reason why Shadow Of The Beast *does not appear in it is quite simple... it's crap.*

Oh, and about those previews. The list was actually compiled before September, but more importantly, our magazine appeared in the shops around mid-September.

And about your future in the magazine industry – Mega Advanced Mega Drive Console Games Monthly XS needs all the help it can get! ***Neil***

ASKING FOR IT

Dear MEGA,
Let me say, your magazine is simply brilliant! It's a great improvement on Sega Gaming, although I do think you should have a section where you can take the mickey out of some letters. Another thing – are you going to have an art section?

I have to say, I'm glad you're not just concentrating on the new SNES, the presentation of this mag is wonderful, it's exactly what Sega gamers have been waiting for.

I hope the publication of MEGA continues in its good taste and nature, and I do hope you don't change the style of reviewing as it is very thorough and accurate. Anyway, enough praise.

Will there be more and better pressies, or will there be more, meaner, MEGA, meanies etc, etc...?
Martyn Sibley, Kingston

Dear Martyn,
We already take the mickey out of people's letters if they're particularly bad, but it's not nice to rip into people just because they don't know something. Far better, we think, to just point out their mistakes or simply answer their questions.

An art section is great in a kiddies mag, but to be quite honest, we have more important stuff to fill the mag with. The only people who would find an art page interesting are the ones who submitted work. So instead of catering for about six people a month, we'd much rather devote the space to a review or something that would potentially be of interest to the whole readership.

Finally, I don't really understand your last request, but on the issue of cover mounted gifts, we'll put something on if it's good. If we come up with an idea for something that would be genuinely interesting or useful, we'll bung it on. but an endless stream of stickers or tattoos is a bit dull really, isn't it? ***Neil***

JUST WONDERING...

Yo, MEGA,
I think that MEGA is the best all Mega Drive publication yet, because it's very funny and informative. I have got some questions for you, which I hope you can answer.

The Wondermega. A Mega Drive, CD ROM and karaoke machine in one

1) Is the Wondermega ever going to appear and if so, how much will is cost?

2) What is the best American Football game for a beginner?

3) What is the best two-player game on the Mega Drive?

Thanks for your time.
Thomas McGoldrick, Belfast

Dear Thomas,
1) We don't have any firm details on this at the moment, but it's unlikely that the Wondermega will appear in this country, at least not for the foreseeable future.

2) All American Footy games are complex if you don't know the rules. So your best bet is to buy the best there is and read the manual thoroughly. And the best there is, is John Madden '93,

Turn over

CONSEQUENCES

It's the moment you've all been waiting for – the part of the mag in which readers send in ridiculous chapters of an already quite bizarre story. It'll leave you numbed, it'll make you confused, but one thing's for sure, there won't be a laugh (or even a mild chortle) to be heard.

The story so far...
Neil's aunt has returned from Morocco with a large electromagnet. It was to be used to pick the tomato crop, but instead has caused Paul's hydraulic leg inserts to go a bit funny, sending him hurtling off at approximately 45 mph. What's more, the tomatoes have turned into strawberries and a lighthouse keeper is residing in the garden. Whatever next?

The room began to rumble in a very worrying fashion indeed. Everyone looked at each other (apart from Paul, who was, at the time, just passing through Swindon). In a flash and a puff of smoke, a small fat fellow appeared in the room. It was the God of video games.

"Hiya! Me name's Danny "bloody" Curley an' I 'ave to inform you that this is bloody silly. By 'eck, this is one cack story. Get your bloody acts to-bloody-gether."

And with that he downed 12 pints of Stella, and rushed off to the toilet never to be seen again.

"He's right you know," said Amanda, "this is pretty daft!"

"YES," they all cried together. Sadly the realisation was too much for them to bear, so they buried themselves in the garden to avoid any further embarrassment. It was, of course, a very foolish thing to do. Their brains and indeed their lungs were soon starved of oxygen and the whole team ceased to be.

As the sun set over Reading, the blur of the last remaining member of MEGA, Paul Mellerick, could be seen disappearing over the horizon, now doing an astonishing 120 mph. The lighthouse keeper chuckled quietly to himself.

"Ho, ho," he said (for that was the manner in which he chuckled), "I think it's time to celebrate the acquisition of my new home with a quick game of Super Mario World*."*

Who the dickens is that so-called lighthouse keeper?

Will Paul ever come to a standstill, and will anyone really remember who he is in two days time?

And how long will it take the MEGA team to decompose?

Find out next month (if you have nothing better to do).

The person we have to thank for this somewhat worrying turn of events is *James Morrison*, who, according to the letter, is alive and well and living in Doncaster. For his contribution he gets a spanking new cartridge for his collection.

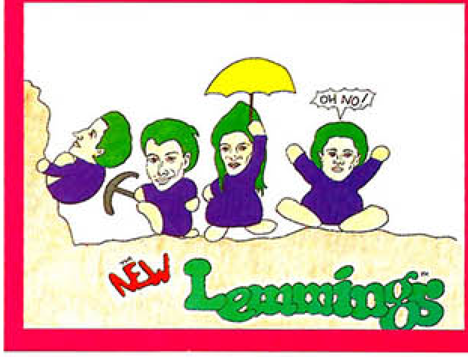
So, you see, it's easy isn't it? All you have to do is scrawl approximately 200 words on a piece of paper, make sure they sort of vaguely follow on from this instalment, then send 'em in to: "Will this Consequences rubbish never end?", MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Win a cart, get writing.

LETTERS

which should be out nowish – get issue three of MEGA for the full review of this; the best Mega Drive game ever.

3) Dunno about the best two-player game, but Madden '93 *is one of the best,* NHLPA Hockey *is fab,* Lotus Turbo Challenge *is great and* Road Rash 2 *(reviewed on page 48 of this issue of MEGA) is spectacular.* **Neil**

QUICK COMPO WINNER



In last month's MEGA we asked the readers to send in a caricature of the team. We had quite a few entries, but we felt that this piccie of us all as Lemmings was the most imaginative. The winner of the quick compo is in fact two people. *Darren and Christine Browne* of Ashby in Scunthorpe are responsible for this masterpiece, so we're going to give them a year's free subscription to MEGA – the lucky, lucky things.

WHICH DEVICE?

Dear MEGA,
I believe congratulations are in order for the publication of a most excellent Mega Drive magazine.

I have read MEGA cover to cover and am most impressed – excellent. Keep it to this standard for a few months and I think I may part with the cash for a subscription.

Anyway, down to some questions. Would it be possible for you chaps at MEGA to print a map of all the stages of *Alien 3*, this being my fave game at the moment and all that?

GAME GENIE
ACTION REPLAY

Action Replay and Game Genie carts. But which is the best one?

Secondly, I have been thinking of investing in a Game Genie or Action Replay cart. Which is the best to buy, and why?
Mr Kevin Smith, Co Durham

Dear Kevin,
Just take a look at our RIP 'N' TIP section (see page 69) and all your prayers will be answered.

The Game Genie and Action Replay carts are very different beasts. They both do different jobs and have their own uses.

The Game Genie can do all sorts of bizarre things to your games; like giving you extra high jumps or speeding up enemies. The thing is, it's quite hard to make up codes of your own, so if the game you want to cheat on doesn't appear in the code book you get with it, you're doomed.

With the Action Replay you can get infinite lives within a couple of minutes on practically any game. If you just want infinite lives, energy, continues etc, then go for the Action Replay. If on the other hand, you want to spruce up an old game that you've got bored of, try the Genie. **Neil**

WHAT A PRICK IT WAS...

Dear Lads and Lassies,
I've got a complaint. In your first issue, you very generously (note the sarcasm) presented us with a free badge. Great, I thought, this will really impress the girlies.

I eagerly whipped it out (the badge, that is) and stuck it on my woolly jumper, when suddenly I felt a prick. Now I know what you're thinking. If you were 26 years old, wearing a woolly jumper, dungarees and Clark shoes, you'd feel like one too, right! Well no, the reason I felt a prick was because of that damn pointy bit on the back of the badge. So next time, can we please have a normal fastener or better still don't bother with naff gifts like these.

PS. MEGA's not a bad mag. I think 100 pages for £2 is truly excellent value for money.
Yours (if you want me)
Pete Shilling, Poole

Dear Pete,
Sorry if our badge caused you grievous bodily harm, but perhaps you should have realised that something with a large spike on the back shouldn't be worn next to the skin. Stick it on a jacket or something. But while we're on the subject, why don't the readers out there write in and tell us what you think of covermounts. Do you love 'em or loathe 'em? And while you're at it, come up with a few ideas of what you'd like to see given away. **Neil**

WHAT'S IN A SEQUEL?

Dear MEGA MOUTH,
Congratulations on producing an exceptional mag. I have been buying another exclusively Mega Drive mag, but that has been lagging somewhat lately. I hope you can keep up this standard.

Question: What have *John Madden, EA Hockey, Road Rash, Streets of Rage, Super Monaco GP, PGA Golf* all got in common?

TIME
POSITION
LAP

***Super Monaco GP2* – A true sequel, or just a re-hash of the original?**

Answer: I have them all and they have been or will be "updated" with twitches here and there to make them better.

This raises a few points from the depths of my mind.

1) Can you recommend a good way of getting rid of these games in exchange for their later newer versions – either a trade-in or a second-hand buyer? If everyone wants updates, then surely the originals will become worth diddly-squat in second-hand value terms, and I will be stuck with over £200 worth of dinosaurs worth zippo.

2) How often do you think these updates will occur – once a year, once a month? Am I going to have to guess when a new version is coming out and gamble to get the most for my old cartridge?

3) Do you think this is right?

4) What happens to all the useless old carts that will soon become as extinct as the ZX81 – can't they be recycled somehow?

5) Anyone who wants one of the above games at £20 each should ring 0606 75389.

6) That's it – I feel better having got that out of my system.
Simon James, Norwich

Dear Simon,
Just a few words before I answer your questions directly. Road Rash 2 *and* Streets Of Rage 2 *aren't updated versions of the originals. They're sequels, and as such are completely different. OK perhaps not completely different – the themes are obviously the same, but anyone who bought and liked the originals will get pleasure out of the follow-ups.*

However, John Madden '93 *is very much like its two predecessors.* Madden '93 *is not intended as a second or third purchase, but as an alternative to the previous incarnations. If you haven't already got a Madden game, you can now buy the '93 version and get a few extras too. It's a bit like owning a really flash telly, then a year later seeing your friend buy the new model with remote control. That doesn't mean your telly is useless, it just means that the newer one is just that little bit improved.*

1) If you want to get rid of your carts, by writing to us you've already taken a step in the right direction. You could go a step further by writing to CART TO CART (see page 89 of this issue of MEGA).

2) Like I said, if you already have Madden '92, *the need to get* Madden '93 *is debatable. You will have to decide, depending on how much of a fanatic you are.*

3) If the games were being sold as all-new sequels, then it would be wrong, but they're not. They're for people who haven't already got the previous versions.

4) Nope. Console carts are very eco-unfriendly in that respect.

5) Any interested parties out there?

6) Glad to be of service. **Neil**

STARS OF THE SHOW

Dear Neil and Amanda,
Hi, remember us? Alex and Brendan from the Future Entertainment Show. We really enjoyed every minute, especially meeting the MEGA team. I do agree on your rating of *Sonic 2*; it really is great. We got both of your signatures at the show as well as all the other stars, not to mention the big man himself (Nick Alexander). One small thing, you promised us a mention in your FAB mag. So please would you print this letter? Thank you. Finally, will you be at the Gamesmaster Live show? If so, see you there.
Bren and Alex, Stamford

Dear Bren and Alex,
I remember our glorious encounter very well indeed. I'm glad you enjoyed the show (turn to page 100 for the post show write-up), because we thought it was brill.

As for the Gamesmaster show, by the time you read this it will already have happened so you'll know if we were there or not. But for those of you who didn't go to it, remember that the official Gamesmaster magazine is now in the shops.

So, if you like the TV programme, you'll love the magazine. We can highly recommend it, because it's made by the same company which produces MEGA, so it must be good. **Neil and Amanda**

EXCERPTS FROM THE DIARY OF A STUNT MEGA DRIVE

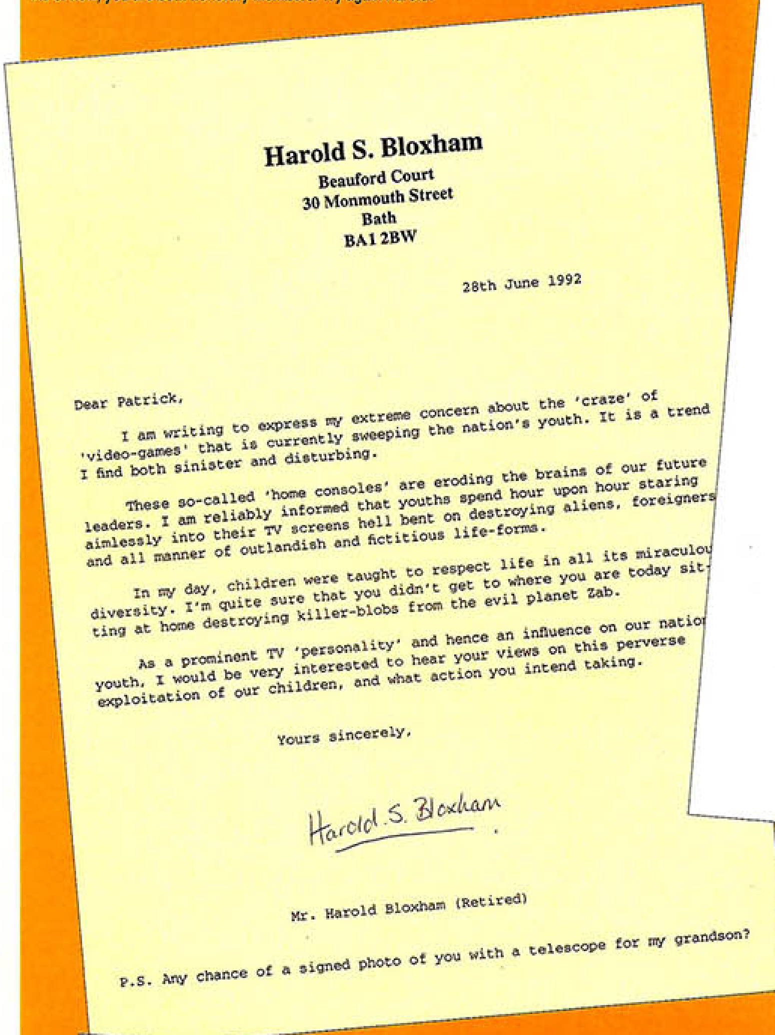
We're not entirely sure which stunt this particular Mega Drive is performing, but it made us chuckle anyway. Perhaps it's carrying out the highly dangerous feat of "wearing some clothes and appearing to be completely flat". Whatever it is, it means that *Robin Gray* of St Helens in Merseyside (for it was he who sent it in) gets a brand spanking new cartridge for his machine. Send all your photographs of your Mega Drives to: Stunt Mega Drive, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Go on, have a giggle.

LETTER-BOX

Why not jot us a few lines, at: MEGA MOUTH, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA2 2BW, or fax us on 0225 446019.

HAROLD S BLOXHAM

The Colonel's a very determined man. Spurred on by his success with Nanette Newman (she actually agreed with his outlandish views) he has now moved on to Magnus Magnusson and Patrick Moore. Perhaps he thought that an intellectual and an astronomer would support him in his hour of madness, but, as is usually the case, sane people have no time for the rantings of this deranged old poop. And so we say to Magnus and Patrick, thank you, and welcome to an ever expanding club, "Friends Of Mega". As of now, you are both honorary members. Try again Harold!



Harold S. Bloxham
Beauford Court
30 Monmouth Street
Bath
BA1 2BW

28th June 1992

Dear Patrick,

I am writing to express my extreme concern about the 'craze' of 'video-games' that is currently sweeping the nation's youth. It is a trend I find both sinister and disturbing.

These so-called 'home consoles' are eroding the brains of our future leaders. I am reliably informed that youths spend hour upon hour staring aimlessly into their TV screens hell bent on destroying aliens, foreigners and all manner of outlandish and fictitious life-forms.

In my day, children were taught to respect life in all its miraculou diversity. I'm quite sure that you didn't get to where you are today sitting at home destroying killer-blobs from the evil planet Zab.

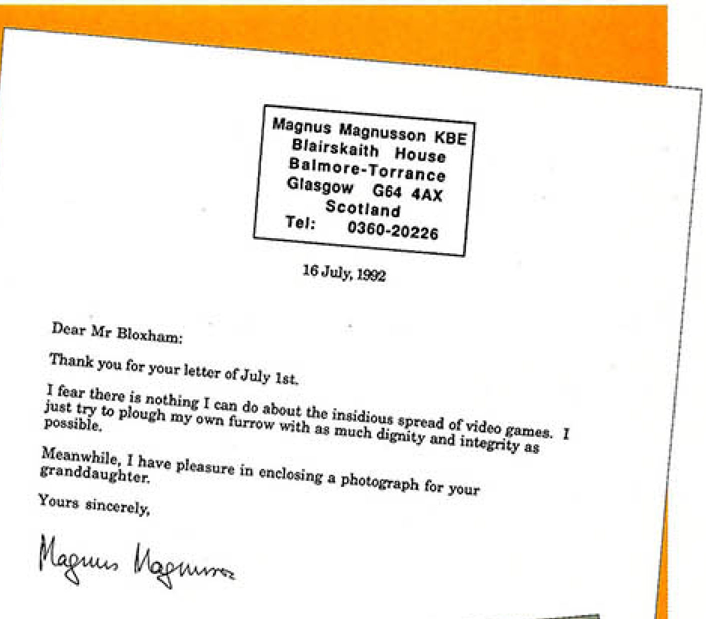
As a prominent TV 'personality' and hence an influence on our natio youth, I would be very interested to hear your views on this perverse exploitation of our children, and what action you intend taking.

Yours sincerely,

Harold S. Bloxham

Mr. Harold Bloxham (Retired)

P.S. Any chance of a signed photo of you with a telescope for my grandson?



Magnus Magnusson KBE
Blairskaith House
Balmore-Torrance
Glasgow G64 4AX
Scotland
Tel: 0360-20226

16 July, 1992

Dear Mr Bloxham:

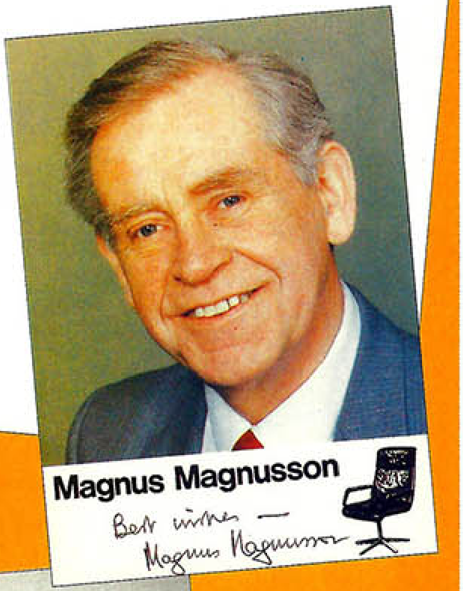
Thank you for your letter of July 1st.

I fear there is nothing I can do about the insidious spread of video games. I just try to plough my own furrow with as much dignity and integrity as possible.

Meanwhile, I have pleasure in enclosing a photograph for your granddaughter.

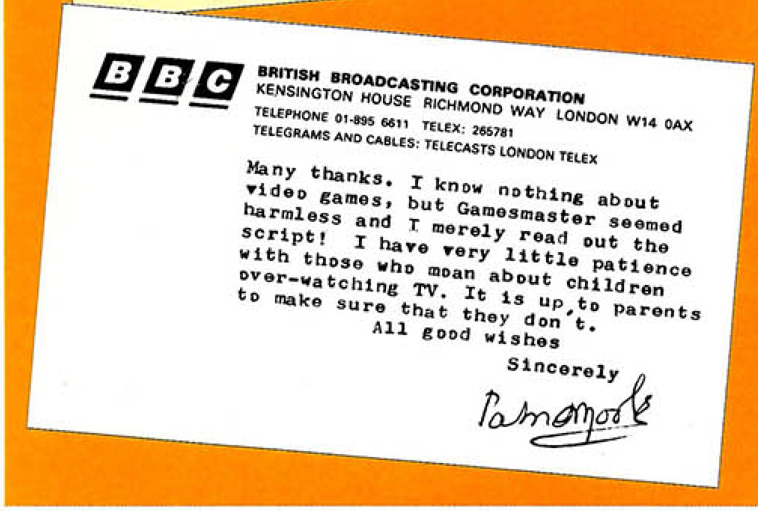
Yours sincerely,

Magnus Magnusson



Magnus Magnusson

Best wishes —
Magnus Magnusson



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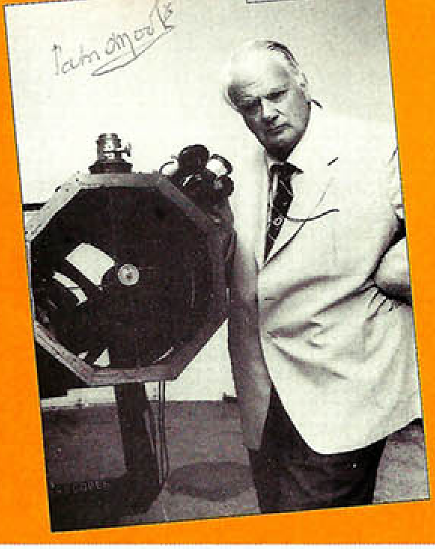
BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION
KENSINGTON HOUSE RICHMOND WAY LONDON W14 0AX
TELEPHONE 01-895 6611 TELEX: 265781
TELEGRAMS AND CABLES: TELECASTS LONDON TELEX

Many thanks. I know nothing about video games, but Gamesmaster seemed harmless and I merely read out the script! I have very little patience with those who moan about children over-watching TV. It is up to parents to make sure that they don't.

All good wishes

Sincerely

Patrick Moore



Patrick Moore

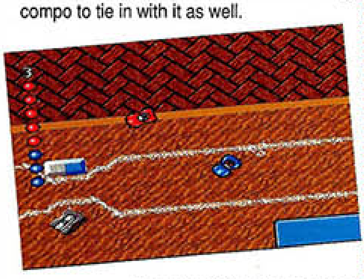
SHUT DOWN

And so, as we switch off our word processors and get ready for the Christmas ordeal, we give you, our beloved readers, a taste of what's to come in next month's MEGA

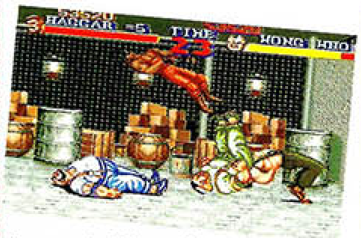
All that remains is to wander slowly home with but one thought in our heads: "We hope you lot will be bloody satisfied".

MICRO MACHINES

This little beauty is shaping up to be one of the most playable games ever to hit the Mega Drive. It's often the simplest ideas that work best, and this is certainly true of this game. If you want to know why the whole MEGA team has gone mad over *Micro Machines,* read the review next month. We may even have a rather exciting compo to tie in with it as well.



Plummeting off a school desk has never been so much fun



Dunno what Haggar's doing here, but all will be clear when *Final Fight* comes to the Mega Drive

FINAL FIGHT

When the Super NES first came out, this was one of the first import games you could get for it, and it was rather good. Before the likes of *Streetfighter II* came along, it was one of the best coin-op conversions of a beat-'em-up you could get. Now it's coming to the Mega CD, and we'll hopefully be carrying the full review of it in our very next issue. Watch this space, well, not this space of course, but the space in the next issue that we'll allocate to the review, um if you see what I mean, er… Oh for God's sake, it was just a figure of speech.

THE As ON THE BACK PAGE

Here we go again. If you haven't already done so, go and look at the Qs In The News (page 11). See how many you can answer, then come back here to tot up your score and see how you did. There are no prizes for this one – it's just to see how clever you are when it comes to all matters concerning the almighty Sega.

1. Sonic 2sday
2. No, no he hasn't. Just the one
3. True
4. Mario Lemieux
5. Three: *Castle Of Illusion, Fantasia* and *World Of Illusion*
6. Four: *James Pond, Robocod, The Aquatic Games* and *Project Starfish*
7. Five (that we know of): *Sonic, Sonic 2, Joe Montana 2* (Sonic appears on the scoreboard), *Sports Talk Baseball* (Sonic appears on the scoreboard again) and *Ayrton Senna's Super Monaco GP* (we show you where next month)
8. Hedgehogs With Attitude
9. Seven
10. Joe Musashi
11. He changes when he touches a falling star
12. F-f-f-fortesque Frog
13. 1990
14. "…plug me into a Sega"
15. *Streets Of Rage* (the others are all battery-backed)
16. *PGA Tour Golf 2*
17. *Micro Machines*
18. *Chiki Chiki Boys*
19. *Gemfire*
20. *Universal Soldier*

1 – 8 points: CRAP!

9 – 14 points: Not so CRAP!

15 – 17 points: Not really very CRAP at all.

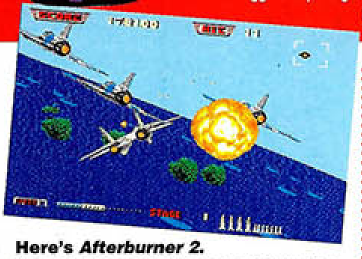
18 – 20 points: Decidedly un-CRAP. In fact, you have veered violently away from the CRAP side and can give yourself an almighty thump on the back

MEGA TV STARDOM COMPETITION

Amazingly, some lucky blighter won the coin-op and all the rest of the goodies in our TV Stardom compo. So what do we do as a follow-up? Well, we're gonna do it all over again. The first prize with which to kick off this brilliant compo is a genuine *Road Rash* leather jacket (that's worth loads in itself and it looks bloody smart too) plus *Greendog* and *Sonic 2* T-shirts to wear underneath it.

This is what you have to do. Get yourself on TV holding a copy of MEGA. When the programme you appeared on is shown on telly, video it, and send the tape to us. Make sure you tape enough of the programme to convince us that it wasn't done on the family camcorder, and you'll be fine. Oh, and don't go robbing a bank or anything just to get your fizzog on the box.

Send your vids to "Lummy 'eck, my MEGA made the big time" compo, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW. Entries should be sent in as soon as you can manage this mean feat. There's no actual closing date for this one, but if no-one wins this month, we'll add another prize next month. The longer the compo stays open, the bigger the prize gets. Employees of Future Publishing can't enter, but good luck to the rest of you.



Here's *Afterburner 2.* Yule (token Christmas gag) have to wait until next issue for *Afterburner 3*

AFTERBURNER 3

Afterburner 2 was surprisingly good on the Mega Drive, considering the technical limitations of the machine (compared to that of the coin-op that is), so we're expecting great things from this third instalment. If the heavenly spheres are in alignment and fate smiles upon our mighty mag, we'll be reviewing the game in our very next issue.

AND MORE…

Quite aside from those three big, big reviews, we'll also be reviewing a whole heap of other stuff, including *PGA Tour Golf 2, Rolo To The Rescue* and *Strider 2.*

We'll also, of course, be bringing you all the latest news and previews, some dead exciting features and last but not least, our biggest ever tips section.

Looks like 1993 is going to begin with a bang, then a whoop, followed by a few screeches and ending with several throaty gurgling noises which we can't quite find a word for at the moment. See you next year.

TIPS

Well, without being too specific, we're going to have a stonking great tips section for you next month.

ISSUE 5
out on Thursday 21 January

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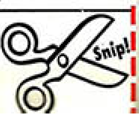

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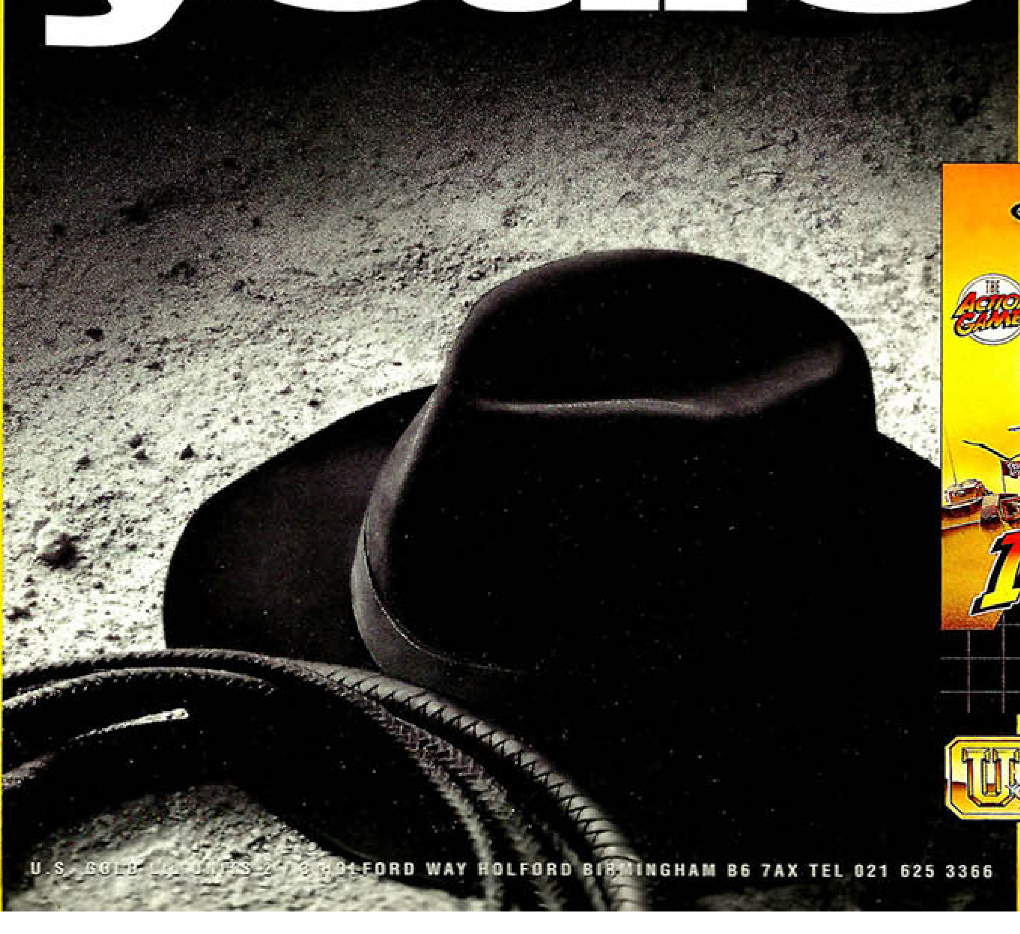

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MEGA

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